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INDIA'S OPPORTUNITY

SOBER men of both races will approach the new proposals made to India with a sense that the shadow of destiny lies upon them. This chance may never come again. What Congress and the Moslem League decide this week may determine the fortunes, not of India only, but of all Asia for generations to come. We will spend no time in regretting that this offer was made only after danger had driven the rulers of this Empire into plain dealing. It is enough for the moment that thanks to Sir Stafford Cripps it has at last been made and that it is as straightforward as it is bold. It means, if Indians will accept this road to freedom, that their country will take her place beside us as a free nation on equal terms with the Dominions immediately after the war. Her right, when the Indian Union is formed, to decide for herself whether she will enjoy her independence in partnership with the Dominions and with us, or in isolation, is frankly acknowledged. She will have the right to secede. Better still, a procedure has been devised which deprives a dissentient minority of its power to veto a settlement. Every previous statement of our intentions has failed primarily because our surrender of sovereignty was made conditional on the attainment of unanimity among Indian parties. It was open, more particularly to the Moslem League, to hold up consent by rejecting any democratic Federal Union on principle. The new proposals deliver it from that temptation. It lies no longer with Mr. Jinnah and his League to decide whether a separate Moslem Ulster must break away from the Indian Union. That decision now lies, where it ought to lie, not with any party, however influential, but with the provinces which have a Moslem majority, through their legislatures, after fresh elections. Congress, on the other hand, has carried a point it considered vital: that the constitution of the Indian Union shall be adopted by a representative Constituent Assembly, chosen, however, by a more workable procedure than it had proposed. It is also important and right that the Union's relations with the Crown and the Commonwealth will be determined by treaty. Finally, as we read the document with the aid of Sir Stafford Cripps's commentary, there is no thought of retaining our alien guardianship of the minorities, when once the treaty, with its charter of rights, is adopted. It will then pass to the Indian Union. The future constitution, to use plain words, will neither be imposed on Indians nor granted to Indians by a Parliament responsible to another electorate. All this is as it should be, and it suffices to establish the good faith of the offer.

So far the offer is as large as it is honest. We could have wished, for psychological reasons, that in speaking of the future the document had bravely used the word "independence." The Dominion idea contains it, since the right of secession is conceded. But the word "Dominion" has no magic for them. They can never feel, as Australians and New Zealanders do, that theirs is a daughter nation of the Motherland in Europe. The constitutional plan which fits that relationship can never seem to them the natural expression of a family tie. The more important ties, economic as well as cultural, in their future development may be those which will link them with China and other Asiatic neighbours. Words, it may be, matter more to Indians than to realistic Anglo-Saxons. The substance, none the less, of independence is plainly in this offer. The real difficulty arises, not on this point, but on the reservation of defence in the interim offer of some measure of self-government at once. How far in wartime can a nation be said to be self-governing at all if others direct its defence? Indians would probably accept without demur a provision that General Wavell, as Commander-in-Chief, shall direct all military operations. But much more than this would seem to be reserved, and Indian opinion seems not to be satisfied with the suggestion of an Indian Defence Member on the Executive Council. Indians may well ask one or two concrete questions. Will the army at last be opened wide to general recruitment, or may the Blimps still in effect exclude all but the so-called martial races? Will Indians be allowed and helped to form a true Home Guard, and, if so, will it be trusted with arms? If we mean that Indians shall exercise the reality of power in their own land, we cannot refuse to allow them to arm under their own leaders, though we may fairly stipulate that an able and experienced British general shall organise and command. The danger, from the side of Congress, to the new proposals, springs from these heavy reservations in the grant of *de facto* self-government to-day. The intention, however, may be more generous than the actual wording of the scheme.

When we turn to the Moslem League, the danger is that though the scheme offers a procedure by which "Pakistan," as a separate Moslem Dominion, may be realised if any of the Provinces desire it, Mr. Jinnah may know very well that none of them are in fact likely to vote for it. In that event it is possible that he may fall back on his fundamental refusal to be bound by a majority vote. He may claim, as he did before, parity with the Hindus in the Executive Council. As logically he might demand parity of votes for the two communities in the future Constituent Assembly. His case is that Moslems are a distinct nation, which will not bow to an All-Indian majority, and might not, even in their own provinces, accept a decision partly determined by Sikh and Hindu votes. The best to hope for, if he were to take this line, is that wiser men of his own creed may overrule him. The main difficulty in the other thorny problem of the Indian States is that, by this scheme, the Princes, as autocrats, will nominate their delegates to the Constituent Assembly. This solid reactionary block of one-third of the

votes might bring into being a very unsatisfactory federal constitution. These are the dangers and defects of the scheme. They look, however, rather worse on paper than they would prove in practice. If Indians have the wisdom and the largeness of mind to accept this honest if belated offer, a new temper and outlook will transform the entire life of this Peninsula. In a patriotic effort to secure by arms this new promise of freedom, this nation would find a unity which neither Princes nor politicians could break. The chance has come which brave men will embrace. But if they trust us, then we in turn must trust them with responsibility and with arms.

Raid or Diversion?

There has been little change during the past week on any of the main fronts, but the brilliant raid on the German naval base at St. Nazaire has rightly raised our spirits. It was the biggest offensive operation yet attempted by the amphibian commando technique, and subsequent photographs are said to prove its complete success. Many a month will pass before the enemy can again use this valuable dry-dock. The hope and expectation of public opinion is that the scale and frequency of such offensive operations will rapidly grow, until they amount to a diversion that will seriously impede the Germans in their coming spring offensive towards the Caucasus. With tact and good temper, yet in very plain words, Mr. Maisky, following Mr. Litvinov, General Sikorsky and Stalin himself, has repeated Russia's plea for a serious diversion in the West. The aim of the United Nations should be the defeat of Germany in 1942. The visit of King Boris to Hitler means that the Germans are making yet another attempt to compel Bulgaria to declare war on the Soviet Union. Given the attachment of her peasants to Russia, it is doubtful whether she dare do more than send a token force to the Ukranian front. The Turks are still anxious lest the Bulgarian army should be used against them: another possibility is that part of it may be sent to Libya. It seems that the Hungarians have not agreed to add to their forces facing Russia, though they may replace casualties.

In the East the situation in Burma is still anxious. The Japanese have nearly secured command of the air, and are pressing by the two parallel valley routes towards the oil-fields, against strong and growing Chinese resistance. It is to be expected that they may soon launch an expedition by sea against the deltas of the coast of Bengal: thereafter, with the Andaman islands in their possession, their further objectives may be Madras and Ceylon. Their operations in New Guinea, where their sea-borne forces are gathering, might conceivably point to an attack on Northern Australia, but it is more probable that they will try to seize the islands which lie on the routes linking Australia with America—the Solomons, Fiji and New Caledonia.

Butyl and Buna

The Standard Oil Company of New Jersey has a cartel agreement with I.G. Farbenindustrie, the German chemical combine. Each aims at a world market for its wares, but Farbenindustrie does not trespass on the oil market, except for synthetic petrol made in Germany, and in return Standard Oil gives it all patents for chemical by-products of the oil industry. The arrangement works smoothly enough even in wartime. In 1939 the Standard Oil subsidiary in the Reich was helping to design plants for the manufacture of aviation spirit by an American formula. The two-way traffic is somewhat impeded by totalitarian politics. Farbenindustrie gave Standard Oil its process for making Buna, synthetic rubber, but Hitler objected to its manufacture outside Germany, and the American company deferred to his wish. It then invented its own process, by which Butyl, as it is called, costs half as much as Buna to make. It handed the patents to Farbenindustrie, and to that company's subsidiary, the Pirelli Company of Italy, while refusing them to the American army and navy, as well, of course, as to independent and British firms. In 1939 a Standard Oil representative met a German in Holland, and wrote him that I.G.F. "delivered to me assignments of some 2,000 foreign patents, and we did our best to work out complete plans for a *modus vivendi* which would operate through the term of the war, whether or not the United States came in." Later in the year Standard Oil made arrangements with Mitsui of Japan, because, as it delicately put it, "As we fear the U.S. Government, in the near future, may have grounds for action unfavourable to American and British trade, we consider it timely to organise with our Japanese partners"—in other words, to break the blockade. The United States Government, having taken powers to examine the books of trading companies, produced these facts in a Congressional committee last week; and they were no worse, said the Assistant Attorney-General, than those relating to cartel restrictions of aluminium, drugs, dyes and many other war materials. America is very angry; but this is only one, if a particularly flagrant, case of industrial interests looking after their profits regardless of patriotism. These cartels are only the Briey Basin of the last war writ large. On a long view they are perfect examples of the manner in which the production and marketing of important goods overruns national boundaries, and is already organised on a world scale and controlled by small groups of private people. The only answer to Standard Oil and I.G.F. is to make and sell Butyl under public, international control, for the benefit of the consumers; a control so planned that aggressors should not obtain it from outside sources in wartime.

Home Front (*by an Industrial Correspondent*)

Mr. Assheton, recently transferred from the Ministry of Labour to the Ministry of Supply, told the House of Commons last week that the 40 per cent. increase in output for which Mr. Bevin called last September had been not merely reached, but exceeded. I confess that this announcement surprised me; and even now I wonder to what range of products it actually refers. It is true that a large amount of new productive capacity in Government Ordnance Factories has been brought into commission since last autumn; and I should not be surprised to hear of a 40 per cent. increase in the output of establishments of this type alone. I should, on the other hand, need a good deal of persuading that the general level of output in the war industries has gone up by 40 per cent. during the last few months. The figures quoted by Mr. Assheton—300,000 workers employed in 40 Ordnance Factories, and a million workers in engineering working for the Ministry of Supply alone—sound impressive until one brings them into relation to Mr. Lyttelton's figure of well over 60 per cent. of the national income being spent on Government work, and of 70 per cent. as the practical limit to the division of economic activities to war purposes. The one million—out of, say, 14 million insured workers—does not really mean very much either way. It would be easy to write it up or down by slightly varying the industrial classification. What does emerge is that there has been a very substantial improvement in available equipment for war production during the past six months, as a result of the completion of the programme of new factory construction. As very little further construction is in progress or planned, the problem of efficient factory management is acquiring ever greater importance. We have hardly yet begun to tackle the problem of weeding out managerial inefficiency, or of giving managers who have proved their quality in small establishments a chance of showing what they can do on a larger scale.

* * *

Last week's *Economist* printed a full list of the "Controllers" or their equivalents, not only in the Ministry of Supply, but also in other departments, such as the Ministry of Food. It is an impressive list, which shows that the policy of appointing as Controllers leading men in the trades subject to control, or even of transforming the private Trade Associations into the official instruments of control, has been followed all but universally in the departments concerned with food supply and war production generally. It is also clear from recent appointments that this policy is still being followed without any modification. The newest Controllers are of exactly the same types as the old. Like the *Economist*, the NEW STATESMAN AND NATION has from the first taken strong exception to this method of handing over the State's power to the representatives of business monopoly, and has urged, not that regular Civil Servants ought to be substituted for the business men, but that no business man ought to be appointed to control a trade in which he himself has, or represents, a direct financial interest. The list runs to about sixty names.

* * *

It turns out that, after all, the T.U.C. General Council has not gone so far about Family Allowances as it was stated to have gone last week. The position is not that the T.U.C. Council has announced its conversion, but only that it has withdrawn its ban, and is to discuss the whole question afresh with the Labour Party, any decision upon it being still dependent on the voting of the T.U.C. itself, when it meets in September. This way of dealing with the problem fails to show any sense of its urgency. The case for Family Allowances, is a case not merely for inclusion among projects of "reconstruction," but for action here and now.

* * *

The preliminary agenda for the Labour Party's forthcoming Annual Conference does include an official resolution favouring Family Allowances. In general, the agenda is based on the recently issued interim report on Reconstruction; but a number of subjects, including India, are left over for the presentation of last-minute resolutions by the Executive. The resolutions which have been tabled show the merits and defects of the interim report. They appear at one and the same time to demand socialisation and to preserve the continuance of capitalism. It is notable that the resolution on education, which demands the raising of the school-leaving age to 16 within three years of the end of the war, omits all reference to part-time continued education. This is the more remarkable, because the demand for such education up to 18 was contained in the interim report. Why has it been chopped?

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THE FUTURE OF THE EMPIRE

THE loss of Hongkong, Singapore, Malaya, and the greater part of Burma has given people the kind of shock which makes them take the unaccustomed and distasteful mental exercise of thinking about our political foundations. The *Times* has special and leading articles on the future of the Empire. Mr. Harold Nicolson, in a speech to Irishmen, gave them the glad news that nineteenth-century imperialism is dead and buried. Herr Goebbels goes one better and tells the world nightly that the British Empire is dead and buried. And every one seems to be agreed that whatever may be the condition of the British lion and her cubs when they emerge from the war, the family relations can never again be the same as they were in 1939.

The blows so far struck by Japan have fallen upon what is called the dependent Empire, and in this article we shall confine ourselves to the non self-governing dependencies and their future. Whether the dependent Empire continues to exist after the war is largely in our own hands; it will exist only if we win the war and, while winning it, learn from our previous mistakes to give the dependencies a position in which they will feel themselves to be willing partners, not slaves or servants, in the imperial community. That is the crux of the matter, as even the most hoary and moribund ex-nineteenth-century imperialist is now saying, having had the nineteenth century shaken out of him and a little daylight knocked into him by what happened in Malaya. The Malay and Burmese peasants and workers, as he now sees and says, did not attempt, like the Chinese, to defend their land against the aggressor, because they did not feel that it or the government was theirs—they were the passive subjects of an alien government, and whether that government was British or Japanese did not seem to them worth fighting about.

The ex-imperialist is right in the diagnosis of the disease, though it is a pity that it required a war and the loss of Malaya to open his eyes. Those who told him all this in peacetime, when he might have set his house in order, were called by him utopian. Twenty years ago, and again in 1933, the Labour Party put forward a colonial policy which, if it had been adopted by the country, would have eliminated precisely those "mistakes" now admitted to have lost us Malaya. In its public announcement of its proposals, the Party said that it knew that people would say that they were "unwise and utopian." That is just what all imperialists and conservatives called them. One might accurately define utopia as a proposal rejected by Conservatives when it might have saved them and adopted by them when it is too late for anything to save them.

Ever since the beginning of this century the disease at the root of our colonial policy and the cure of it have been clear to anyone who had the will and the eyes to see them. The disease is paternal government complicated by economic exploitation; the cure democracy and socialism. The paternal government in recent years had a good deal to its credit in elementary education and the health services. But politically we have treated the inhabitants of Malaya as infants, economically as tools or machines by means of which Europeans and their joint stock companies might make profits out of the vegetables and minerals of the country. The ordinary Malay had no more say in the ordering of his country and little more stake in its economic prosperity than the vegetables and minerals had. For years we have done practically nothing to educate him in self-government, nothing to train him to understand the complex economic system of the modern world or to control his own economic fate. How should such a man understand the issues involved in Hitler's world war, and, if he did, what material reason have we given him for fighting to preserve the system which we have imposed upon him? And what we have said about Malaya applies to nine-tenths of our dependent Empire, and *a fortiori* to the millions of people and vast territories which we rule in Africa.

If we and our Asiatic and African subjects are to profit by our past mistakes, we must reverse our previous policy; and we must not wait to do so until the war ends; late and difficult though it may be in the middle of a war, we must prove our sincerity to those subjects and to ourselves by taking steps, wherever possible, to turn over the new leaf at once. What are the outlines of this new policy? The dependent Empire falls roughly into two parts. In the first are territories, like the West Indies and Ceylon, inhabited by people who, with a little guidance and encouragement, would long ago have been capable of governing themselves and controlling their own economic fate. It is characteristic of British imperialists to have given grudgingly and nearly always too late the self-government which such people naturally demand. Of this part of the dependent Empire all that needs to be said is this: if we do not give self-government now, we shall probably never have an opportunity of giving it, for it will simply be taken from us.

The real problem of colonial policy is concerned with the other half of the dependent Empire and pre-eminently Africa. There we have millions of people who, partly owing to our own neglect, are not to-day competent to govern themselves or to fend for themselves in world economics. They are what is called uncivilised, uneducated, unorganised, for the most part wretchedly poor, undernourished, and ravaged by disease. It is true that, as the League Covenant put it, these are peoples "not yet able to stand by themselves under the strenuous conditions of the modern world." The government of them must be paternal, and therefore in the nature of a trust. Paternal government is not at all times and stages a bad thing, and much of the paternalism in our colonial empire during the last century has been admirable and has conferred great benefits upon the subject peoples. To deny this would be silly as well as false. But we have been ruling these Africans for fifty or a hundred years, and the damning charge against our empire is that they are politically and socially in the same infantile position as when we entered their country. This is true fundamentally even in the so-called West African territories where our record of rule is far better than in East Africa. We have done practically nothing to train Africans in self-government or educate them to understand the new way of life which Europe was inevitably imposing upon them. On the contrary, we have again and again put obstacles in the way of their development, by destroying native institutions and putting nothing but the magistrate and policeman in their place, by the colour bar which in its open and insidious forms bars the African from all but the lowest and unintelligent occupations, by starving him of education, and—the worst stain upon our colonial administration—by penalising as "seditious" the first crude stirrings of political thought in Africans and by suppressing their first attempts to act politically in such voluntary associations as the Kikuyu started. That policy must be completely and immediately reversed. Governors should be instructed that their primary political task is to develop self-governing institutions, central and local, in which Africans can control their own affairs and therefore to educate the African in every form of self-government. The development of local government, the wide extension of education, the abolition of the colour bar in every form, the encouragement of trade unions, co-operative and other forms of voluntary association are some of the elementary methods of carrying out such a policy. A Governor should be required to report annually in detail upon the progress in self-government, and his success as an administrator should be judged by that progress.

In Africa, as in the rest of the world, politics and economics are inextricably interwoven. The paternalism of our colonial government had its economic side, which is not unusual in the relations between parents and children. The affectionate father objects to his children becoming "independent" or "wasting their time at school," because if they "go to work" and remain under parental authority they can "contribute to the expenses of the family." So with imperialism, if you turn over paternal government you will almost always find on the other side of the coin economic exploitation. We keep the children children, the backward peoples backward, we do nothing really to train them in self-government and independence, we confine them in the prison of the economic colour bar, ultimately because what our own anarchic economic system inexorably demands from Africa is cheap raw materials and from Africans cheap labour. Here again, as with politics, a complete reversal of the previous policy is essential. On the one side, by abolishing the colour bar in every form and by great extension of general and vocational education we must give the individual African the same economic opportunities, the same power to control his economic fate as we demand for ourselves. On the other side, the whole framework of economic society into which this individual African will have to fit himself must be changed. The changes are of the same nature as, most people are at last being forced to see, we shall have to make in our own society. It is the change from the profit-making system of capitalism to an economy controlled and planned in the interests of the community. There is no space here to go into details, but certain lines of development necessary in Africa can be indicated. In each territory the administration must, for some time to come, plan the economic development in the interests of the inhabitants. They must aim at a balanced system of agriculture, growing both crops for supplying the food required within the territory and export crops; at developing the mineral resources by State or communal enterprise; at encouraging the development of industries, where possible and desirable, under proper safeguards and on socialist lines. And, finally, the colonial reformer will have to face that problem which we shall all have to face when Hitler is beaten, if history is not to become an unending series of economic breakdowns punctuated by world wars, namely, how to fit the planned economy of a particular territory into the planned economy of the world.

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THE IMPLICATIONS OF GRANTHAM

Even if Kendall doesn't get in, if he gets very near it, it'll make the Government see that they've got to do something. Because look at these reverses we've had, stands to reason there must be *laxity* somewhere. Look how they say we would have held some of those places if we'd had fifty more aeroplanes. Fifty more aeroplanes, and we've been at war two and a half years.

Look at agriculture too. We could have turned out more food and saved shipping.

Thus were the people of Grantham, Lincs. talking last week. This passing remark at a street corner, for instance:

"Well, we've got to do something, haven't we? Looks like they want shaking up a bit. We get nothing but promises and promises—and nothing done."

This was the mood of a small country town on the Great North Road; the statue of Newton, outside the Town Hall, had two placards on the pedestal, one linking Newton to National Savings, the other stating:

NEWTON
the father of science
looks down on a world
troubled by science mis-
applied to deeds of war
which are reprobated by
those whom they ruin.

This confused state of mind found expression in the first wartime by-election in which the "official candidate" under the Party truce has been upset:

Mr. W. D. Kendall (Independent)	11,758
Chief Air-Marshal Sir Arthur Longmore (National Government)	11,391

There are only three ways in which the mood of the people can effectively be represented to the Government at the present time—through the press, the House of Commons and opinion surveys. But the press seldom gives an unbiased version of opinion, and the recent warning to the *Daily Mirror* complicates the possibility of reflecting any very critical feeling that may be about. The Government have an official opinion-polling machinery—the Wartime Social Survey, set up for that purpose. Unfortunately (for the Government) under various pressures, the Survey, like a crab, has developed laterally into a formal "market research" system usefully servicing Government departments with important technical information, but avoiding the bigger issues of national mood. The House of Commons remains, its main body of M.P.s elected on the Stanley Baldwin ticket. During two and a half years in which the political ideas of the average citizen have changed perhaps more than ever before in our history, the House of Commons fixed itself at September 3rd, 1939. As members die or become peers, each by-election vacancy is filled by the nominee of whatever party held the seat before. The average age of M.P.s is approaching sixty, and getting older. In 1923 there were only two Labour M.P.s over 70; now there are 23. Among new Labour M.P.s nominated in 1940 and 1941, only two were under 50, though of the 42 new Conservatives, thirteen were under 40, ten over 60.

I mention these points because they give a rough indication of the rather different atmosphere as between an elderly House of Commons well on in its record-breaking seventh year of office, and a nation in which the active burden of war is falling largely on the under-40s, who are more and more asking new questions about the past, the present and the future. A wartime press, a limited Wartime Social Survey, and a 1935 House of Commons between them make it possible for the War Cabinet to be insufficiently aware of the real public mood. It is not the job of the Government to bow to crude public opinion, but it is a small part of its job to know the public mood, on which depends most of the civilian war effort, from absenteeism to hoarding, from national savings to efficient A.R.P. or behaviour in the event of invasion.

It is easy to make too much of a single by-election result, but it is easier to make too little. To upset the National Government candidate is not something a wartime electorate lightly or easily undertakes.

For two and a half years, an assortment of candidates have been trying to defeat party-truce nominees, without success. Back at the beginning of the war, contests were mainly fought by Candidates of Left and Right splinter Parties. At Silvertown in February, 1940, Pollitt and Moran, representing the Left and Right respectively, between them polled less than a tenth of the vote. At Leeds, in the following month, another Right candidate got less than a 25th of the vote, while an anti-war candidate at Battersea during April, 1940, again got less than a tenth. In June, 1940, Mrs. Isabel Brown, Communist, contesting Bow against a Labour man, got under a twentieth of the votes cast, and in the same month, at North Croydon, a Win-the-War Independent got about a tenth of the votes on an 18 per cent. poll.

In the face of regularly forfeited deposits and with a Churchill Government, by-election interest declined. Not until June, 1941, did a new development, the cruising candidate, appear in the person of Mr. N. Pemberton-Billing, whose monocled personality and yellow Rolls thenceforth became a feature of the by-election landscape. Mr. Billing first contested Hornsey and got 4,000 votes to the Conservative 11,000. Then at Wrekin he got 7,000 to the Conservative 9,000. After that he fought Hampstead, where he got 3,000 to the Conservative 8,000, but this time the Independent vote was split by two others, one of whom, Mr. W. R. Hipwell, was by now qualifying as Cruiser II. Mr. Hipwell, editor of "The Forces Newspaper," *Reveille*, had stood in Scarborough in October and scored 8,000 votes to the Conservative 12,000. In December, *Reveille's* publicity manager, Miss Henney, got a fifth of the total vote at Harrow. The day of the automatically forfeited deposit was over.

In Grantham Mr. Hipwell appeared once more, but this time wisely as election agent for Mr. Kendall, 38-years-old, energetic, physically imposing managing director of a large engineering firm. Mr. Kendall's opponent, gentlemanly Air Marshal Sir Arthur Longmore, a local man, aged 59, started with the important advantage of the public prestige which the R.A.F. enjoys. Longmore's platform was straight national unity, his main argument (which had not previously failed in wartime by-elections):

> "In the national interest the Opposition Parties, both Liberal and Labour, agreed not to contest any By-Elections that should occur during the war, so that the whole of the national effort might be directed to the one aim of winning the war. A contest has, however, been forced upon us at this moment when unity amongst ourselves, as well as with our Allies, is of paramount importance. It will entail much unnecessary waste of petrol, time and money which could be better directed to the national effort . . . . I ask all responsible and patriotic Electors, of whatever Party, to remember Freedom is in peril and to pledge themselves, in this present great emergency, to support the National Government Candidate in the interests of National Unity."

He received widely publicised supporting letters from Sir Archibald Sinclair and from the Prime Minister, who stressed the special need for national unity at this time, and described the contest as "forced upon you by an irresponsible faction." Captain Balfour, Under-Secretary of State for Air, spoke for Longmore, as did a number of other M.P.s, and the Lord-Lieutenant of the County (Lord Brownlow), who appeared on the same platform as a Communist speaker. The Communist Party was, of course, the most conspicuous source of Conservative support. While the two candidates refrained from the usual election broadsheets in the interests of paper economy, the Communist Party produced a large "Grantham Special," in which the main article urged wholehearted support for Longmore, and other items stressed a hundred per cent. Communist backing for the Government. In addition, Grantham has an unbroken Conservative tradition—Sir Victor Warrender, Bart, whose peerage caused the contest, has himself represented the constituency since 1923, soon after leaving Eton.

Kendall received little "influential" support. He first put his name forward for Conservative candidate, in addition to Sir Neville Henderson (who was on the short list of nomination). He is a member of the local Labour Club, and of the National Liberal Club in London. He adopted a non-party line. His slogan theme was: Churchill was an Independent, Cripps is an Independent, so am I. This line went across rather well. His policy:

1. "Loyal support for Mr. Churchill."
2. Acceleration of production (by "putting the right men in the right jobs.")
3. Opposition to the Cost-Plus system of war contracts.
4. A "fair deal" for agriculture (the constituency's principal peacetime occupation).
5. Co-ordinated social services with a single over-all contributory scheme, and pensions for all at forty.
6. The welfare of workers now and after the war.

It is misleading to suggest, as the press has done, that Kendall was just a Production candidate. Most of the questions at his meetings were about domestic matters, especially allowances, pensions and post-war unemployment, and he devoted much attention to these points. On Production he simply stated that he was efficient, and he wanted others to be efficient too. Unlike many critics of war industry, he did not attack Supply Departments, Treasury control, or the workers. He attacked no one. There was nothing "cranky" or carping about his candidature. He let Mr. Hipwell do the arguing and cross-talk with the other side—quite a public row developed between Mr. Hipwell and Lord Brownlow on the question of the personalities of the candidates. Kendall had the prestige of an efficient employer, but in general the employer to-day does not enjoy the goodwill of the community: there were the usual stories about Mr. Kendall's factory, where for some time he adopted an allegedly "anti-Union" policy. He is, however, an exceptionally "welfare-minded" employer, and his is the only factory we have yet come across where, as well as a first-class canteen, there is a fine social hall with dance-floor, on which the workers can and do dance every day during the lunch-hour.

A conversation between three working-class Grantham women illustrates the questioning temper:

> A: "After all, we've had one thing for a long time and it hasn't done us much good—now let's try another thing and see if they can alter things."
>
> B: "Things certainly want altering!"
>
> A: "Yes, and Mr. Kendall's the man to do it—look at what a lot of good he's done to the town—we had the last man for 19 years and what did he do for the town?"

C: "Nothing much I know of—except give children tea once a year."

A: "But Mr. Kendall, he'll see to it after the war—men don't want the dole, they want work!"

B: "Ah, they do want work."

At Grantham, the "Silent Revolution" (so effectively analysed for the Services in a recent article in these columns) shows thin signs of becoming a whisper—the more notable because most young voters are, in 1942, temporarily disfranchised.

TOM HARRISSON

"EQUALITY OF SACRIFICE"
—II

IT is a simple, practical plan I put forward—an economic design for total war. It is applicable to the special problems of this country and of no other, for we are a peculiar people, and what goes well enough in Russia or in America will never have a chance to work in opinionated Britain. It is a plan designed, generally, to meet the grievances ventilated in my first article, which arise, as I explained, from the present maldistribution of economic loss.

The special objectives of the plan are four. The first is to break the stranglehold of the vested interests, to give up for the rest of the war the idea of privately owned capital and privately owned labour with vested rights or privileges. The second is to rationalise and concentrate the war economy, so that unnecessary private labour or enterprise or expenditure can be eliminated. This involves, of course, compensation for the economically bombed. The third is to avoid inflation, to give the workers the monetary rewards for their extra effort without inflating the black markets. And the fourth is to inspire. We shall never achieve maximum production without a new enthusiasm and a new morale. We must convince the nation that we have abolished government by vested interests and that we are at last organising the common pool of capital and labour.

My plan for capital is, as it were, a domestic counterpart of Roosevelt's famous "Lease and Lend." The details are set forth in *Vested Interests or Common Pool* which will shortly be published. Here I can only give an outline of the main part of the scheme. I start with the principle that for the duration of the war the State must take a lease of all the real capital resources of the community—that is, our natural wealth and the instruments of production. To pretend that capital can perform its normal risk-bearing functions and earn its normal profits in a period of total war is utter nonsense. Normal trade ceases to function. There are no normal risks which capital can undertake. The truth is that the State becomes the sole entrepreneur, for the only enterprise left is that of war. The peacetime capitalist is therefore forced in wartime to become a rentier.

A State lease of capital for the purposes of total war requires that the whole of the net profits of industry and trade accrue to the Treasury. The former equity owners are compensated, like rentiers, by the receipt of fixed dividends. My proposal is that these fixed dividends should be scaled from 4 per cent. upwards according to the capital risk and wastage in peacetime. The Inland Revenue under the Excess Profits Tax allows for wasting assets but nothing for risk, and foolishly, I think, has fixed 6 per cent. for its capital standard for all public companies and 8 per cent. for private companies. I would start with 4 per cent. for companies which, like electricity supply, suffer no risk and only negligible waste, and I would apply the capital standard to all companies. If some companies function mainly as services and have little tangible capital, I would require them to multiply the scale dividend allowable by the times of the capital turnover in a normal year of trading. (It is a simple formula, and both accountants and Inland Revenue officials are now quite accustomed to calculating the amount of the real capital employed in a business.) My aim is to avoid the profits standard which under E.P.T. puts a premium on the *status quo*, and favours the old-established vested interests—like beer and tobacco companies—with high pre-war profits.

The mechanics of the change-over would be simple. The banking accounts of all trading firms would be blocked by Government order. Payments for running expenses, salaries and wages would be released by the bank managers on the accountants' certificates. (Personal expenses of directors and managers, who have been cheating the Excess Profits Tax, would be disallowed.) All surpluses would then be paid over to the Treasury into a "national trading fund" account, out of which the Treasury would pay the fixed rentier dividends according to the scale allowed to the former equity holders.

How would it look in the national accounts? The Government White Paper on "Sources of War Finance" (April, 1941) estimated profits and interest before N.D.C. and E.P.T. at £1,178 millions in 1938 and £1,514 millions in 1940—a rise of £336 millions. The scale dividends payable as compensation under my plan would work out at less than £1,178 millions because they are less generous than the lavish pre-war profits standard under E.P.T. For 1940 I would guess at least £500 millions as falling under my plan into the Treasury's "national trading fund" after payment of my proposed compensation dividends. This is more than 2½ times the yield of Excess Profits Tax and N.D.C. for 1941/2.

Now you will appreciate the charm and possibilities of my scheme. First, it enables the Excess Profits Tax to be abolished—and all the cheating with it. This would remove a serious brake upon production and cheapen the whole cost of the war output. Secondly, it would remove the working man's suspicion that capital can profiteer out of the war or wangle a profit out of E.P.T. Thirdly, it would extend compensation-fixed dividends to the economically bombed and so enable the Government ruthlessly to concentrate production and distribution, telescope the retail trade and close down the redundant wholesale or middlemen trade which would go far, I think, to dry up the sources of supply of the black marketeers.

These are great gains from the capital side. What has labour to offer to the national safety? The time has surely come to stabilise wages, to end the dangerous spiral of wage rates chasing the cost of living, to take away the surplus of spendable money which is finding an outlet in the black markets. The plan for labour, then, is to have a national wage charter negotiated between Government and Trade Union Congress. Offer labour the following advantages: a national minimum wage, a guaranteed week of so many hours, whether the work is there or not, and family allowances, and a stabilised "iron ration." In return for these advantages, which give it security and a square deal for the war, and make the married man better off, let labour surrender overtime pay, accept the stabilisation of basic wage rates for the remainder of the war, and agree to work at the Government's discretion in any factory or town where the workers' services can best be used. Let special bonuses, instead of overtime pay, provide the money-incentive for extra work and output. Pay by results should be the motto whenever an extra drive is required in a munition factory. And in the negotiations for a national wage charter an attempt should be made to establish equal pay for equal grades of work, which will involve some scaling down as well as scaling up. There are too many anomalies in the wages system, and everyone knows that boys under military age are often being overpaid—and demoralised. With the stabilisation of wages might also go the stabilisation of industrial salaries, but that is another story.

The plan for labour is not complete without a change in the system of taxation and compulsory savings. The Income Tax deducted from wages each week should, of course, be levied on the week's actual earnings, not on the earnings of a previous six months' period. And the system of "post-war credits" should be simplified and extended. No worker can understand "post-war credits" for the complicated cuts in income-tax allowances and the reduction in the tax exemption limit to £110 a year. What they amount to he cannot figure, and how they are to come back to him he cannot fathom. Let us call these credits quite plainly "deferred pay," as the Army does. Let the wages clerk hand out each week to every worker (*a*) cash; (*b*) a receipt for Income Tax paid; and (*c*) a deferred pay credit in the form of Savings Certificates cashable within twelve months after the war. This the worker will understand, appreciate and trust. As the supply of goods available for consumption diminishes, so the amount of tax plus compulsory savings should increase in order to tie up the surplus buying power. It would be better to increase (*c*) than (*b*). In fact, I would begin by reducing tax slightly in order to launch the compulsory savings or deferred pay certificates in a big way. I hope some of these changes will be effected in the war budget. My conviction is that if the whole scheme were fairly and properly explained to the working rank and file, it would be welcomed. Security, family allowances, a stabilised cost of living and deferred pay (in savings certificates) *which can be spent when there are goods in the shops to buy*—this would surely appeal to the common sense of the working man's family.

The scheme implies, of course, that there is a common pool of managers as well as of labour, and that the State manages—as it does the railways—all the coal, iron and steel, munition and engineering companies, leaving in private hands only the management of outside trades subject to their general supervision by departmental order. On the change-over the former managers would report, not to their old boards of directors (which would function simply as trustees for the shareholders now in receipt of the fixed dividends) but to the State managers attached to the Regional Production Boards. The scheme would work if the State has the power to draw upon a pool of all the skilled managers in the country. If any of them felt deprived of their old profit incentive, let them share with the workers in any bonuses paid to secure extra output (beyond the guaranteed week) in factories where a speed-up of production was required. Patriotism is not dead in the business world. And when the munition workers realise that they have become State servants, that their managers are paid (or sacked) by the Government, that their daily toil is not for private profit, but for the national defence and safety, don't you think that they will work with a new will and a tremendous zest?

To cap it all, when the national wage charter is negotiated, let the national minimum wage

wage be applied as pay to every man in the fighting services, less a flat-rate deduction of around one guinea for the weekly cost of his (pre-war) maintenance and clothing. But let deferred pay take up a larger proportion of the total, so that the men do not try to spend in their canteens more than the supply of goods can meet. The fighting men would then be on the same footing as the munition workers. After all, why try to differentiate in total war between the fighters for democracy? Why try to run the domestic front on profit and the battle front on glory?

You must admit that my scheme does make an effort to realise the popular conception of "equality of sacrifice." NICHOLAS DAVENPORT

A LONDON DIARY

CRITIC, who has perforce been absent for a fortnight, has spent the last week in Eire, a country, he writes, where you may pass the whole day without hearing anyone talk of the war. He will write next week of the bizarre experience of stepping for a moment into the abnormal atmosphere of normality. There was talk even in Dublin of the warning to the *Daily Mirror*, but so remarkable is Irish censorship that not even that topic could be discussed in any controversial spirit in the Irish press. The absence of comment and the careful censorship of news—the Irish press may not refer to Irishmen joining the British Forces or winning the V.C. !—is a natural result and perhaps a necessary corollary of neutrality. You must damp down interest in the war if you want to keep neutral; you must increase interest in the conduct and meaning of the war and give rein to criticism of incompetence if you want a keen and fighting public. That is precisely why threats to the freedom of the press in a democracy fighting a war is so dangerous. I was glad to see that in the debate on the *Daily Mirror*, M.P.s pointed to the comparison with France in 1940. Stagnation and censorship lead to neutrality of feeling. The complacency of the *Daily Telegraph* is as dangerous as the most irresponsible fault-finding. No paper means more to the soldier than the *Daily Mirror*; the voice of Cassandra, often as I dislike what he says, has been an authentic echo of popular comment in the Forces. Aneurin Bevin made a powerful speech in this debate. He argued that Mr. Morrison, writing himself in the *Daily Mirror* in the Chamberlain days, insisted that it was necessary to expose "the unsuccessful prosecution of the war," and he claimed, not quite convincingly, that this was all the *Daily Mirror* itself has done. I am glad to see that a strong deputation is to wait on Mr. Morrison and that the National Council for Civil Liberties has arranged for a public meeting in the Caxton Hall at 2.30 on April 11.

* * *

Many English people not only have been distressed, as we all are, at our bombs killing French workmen in the Renault factories, but also assume that the bombing must have alienated from us the good will of many Frenchmen. Evidence, however, is now reaching this country that the raid had a most bracing effect. The French are a realistic nation, and this display of our air power gave them tangible grounds for hope. The general feeling of the French can be deduced also by listening to the German-controlled wireless station, Radio-Paris. This made repeated attacks on the French for not being angered by the raid; moreover, when workmen, who had been wounded or had lost relations in the bombing, were brought to the microphone, not one denounced the British. The only complaint voiced against us was "They might have come on a Saturday." (Whereupon the speaker was hurried away.) Few people in the occupied countries now doubt our good intentions; it is our strength of which they are still unconvinced.

* * *

A study of the social and psychological effects of rationing, if made by a master mind, would give us new and profound insight into communal and individual psychology. Almost every move in the complicated game of preventing A getting less than B or more than C produces a new and puzzling conundrum. Take the case of a limited but not rationed commodity, like whisky or fish. There has sprung up all over the country a voluntary rationing system imposed upon us by the shopkeepers; it consists in rationing the "regular customer" and saying to everyone else: "I am sorry we haven't any!" Is this system fair? Many people are violently saying "No." An Army officer wrote a pathetic letter to the *Manchester Guardian* the other day complaining that, as he had been recently transferred to the Manchester district, he was a "regular customer" of no wine merchant there and so could not buy a bottle of whisky. Fish is the same as whisky; if you look at the stone slab of a fishmonger's shop, you would think that the only fish now given up by the sea are dried cod, fish cakes, and an occasional dab. But at the back of the shop are herrings and other delicacies reserved for "regular customers." There is no doubt that this system works unfairly for some people. But it has one great merit—it puts a stopper on the shop-crawler. While on the subject of rationing, I should like to ask a question. Why does not the Government encourage the making and eating of macaroni, instead of letting it go completely off the market? Macaroni and *pasta* generally can turn a scrap of fish or meat or a few vegetables into a delicious and a filling meal.

* * *

"I call it real hard," said the inn-keeper's wife. "It's one of the best farms hereabouts for many miles. Large place, you know, running to well over a thousand acres, and the best part of it under plough. What's more, there's more of it sown with crops this year than ever before, because the Committee made them plough-up a lot of new land. Maintained ten families that farm did. There must have been between forty and fifty of them living there in all—regular little colony—and now they have got to go. At a fortnight's notice, too, because the War Office is going to take the whole place over. All the twelve houses they are taking, and every man Jack of them has got to get out. Some of them have been there for forty years or more."

"I suppose they can get work elsewhere?" I asked.

"Well, they might get work, some of them, but where are they to get houses? There isn't a cottage to be had for miles around here. And many of them can't get work. You see, they have been there too long; most of the men have been on that farm for between thirty and forty years, and they are too old to change their ways now. Besides, who is going to take old chaps like that on, when they have got to pay them £3 a week? No, it's the 'poorhouse,' I'm afraid, for them."

"But, surely," I said, "a fortnight is very short notice."

"Well, they had a protest meeting of the farmers roundabout here, and now they have got the fortnight extended to the end of April, but they have all got to be out by then, and the goods and the furniture and the farm things are all going to be sold by auction."

Further enquiry elicited the fact that the so carefully ploughed-up land, ploughed by the express instructions of the War Agricultural Committee, is to be sown down again for grass, and that the Government is generously to supply the grass seed. But from my experience of these downs and the disastrous effect of tanks on down-land turf, there won't be much grass left when the tanks have finished their exercises. I thought of the thousands of square acres of empty uncultivated moorland in the North, used for no mortal purpose but the slaughter of grouse. Just the place, one would have thought, those moors, with their heather, their bogs and their ravines, for exercising tanks. I agreed with the landlady, it did "seem hard."

* * *

The March number of *Horizon* contains a very interesting article on the subject of war guilt. The author, who signs himself "Neuro," is discussing, not national responsibilities for the war, but the much less debated and more immediate problem of personal guilt feelings. Everyone to some extent has these feelings in wartime, and it is the aim of our more subtle propaganda to smooth them away. The blitz, by involving everyone, banished complexes, which are now returning. These feelings, says "Neuro," are most acute among the intelligent, the scholars, writers and artists in their thirties who were too young for the last war and almost too old for this. They tend, if taken into the Forces, to gravitate back into civilian life; or they "manoeuvre into an M.I. job or the War Office, only to find that this gives them the worst of both worlds." Obviously an important part can be played in war by intellectuals, directly or indirectly, but many of them are difficult to fit in. What is to be done? "Neuro's" hints are, necessarily, rather vague. He suggests that the intellectual should make greater efforts to adapt himself; that better propaganda should be devised to persuade him; that a magazine like *Horizon* should devote more space to discussing a problem which immediately concerns its readers. The position of the intellectual and artist is summed up thus: "The duty of a man of brains is substantially unaffected by war. It is now, as always, to try to find an outlet for his powers either in the interests of humanity or, if he be a professional artist, in the direction of creative achievement. Now, as always, it is his duty to pay no attention to danger or physical discomfort one way or the other—that is to say, either as an attraction or a deterrent." That seems to me a clear-cut and valuable statement, which I hope will be followed up and debated in later numbers of *Horizon*.

* * *

Two examples of changing conditions in the food market have caught my eye during the last few days. One is the number of horse-meat shops springing up everywhere; there are two within a few yards of one another in a well-known Soho street. The horse-meat is "for human consumption only" and costs a shilling for the best cuts. The other example was more picturesque. In a small butcher's shop facing Smithfield Market, I saw a swan hanging, head down, in all its plumage. The price was £1. You buy the whole bird or not at all.

* * *

A psychologist was holding forth on the comparison between Hitler and Joan of Arc. Both are representatives of the type of paranoiac who sees visions, lives by intuition and inspires a militant faith in his followers. One of the audience said: "That's all right with me. And I don't care if you beatify Hitler too in 300 years time, provided you burn him now!" POLYCRITIC

THIS ENGLAND

A 5/- prize for the first entry in this column goes to Angus MacPhail.

Paste entries on postcard or slip of paper and give details of origin. Address to THIS ENGLAND, 10 Great Turnstile, W.C.1.

Lavender water was ordered to be sprayed round a fire-station prior to a visit by the Regional Commissioner, the Earl of Dudley.—*Reynolds News.*

Lord Simon, the Lord Chancellor, replying to the debate in the House of Lords on the *Daily Mirror*, said he felt very grateful to Lord Camrose, whom he compared to a dignified, well-conducted, and dignified mastiff who had administered a nip to the ill-conditioned and ill-bred specimen whose yelpings have been the cause of the debate.—Report of Lords debate in *Daily Herald.*

Lord Maugham argued that it was not fair play to the soldier and not a justifiable act to walk in mufti along the road and shoot an enemy from behind a hedge or wall. At the same time a complete uniform was not necessary, and he suggested a fixed emblem such as an armlet which could be seen at some distance.—*Manchester Guardian.*

Lord Loch, chairman of the Greyhound Racing Association Trust, doesn't like the austerity programme. He told shareholders that greyhound racing should not be singled out for special restrictions when music, concerts, theatres, and cinemas go free. "Racing and boxing," he adds, "are the full-blooded sports upon which the Commando spirit so essential to winning the war is founded."—*Daily Express.*

What our people really need, in view of the atrocities by the enemy, is a real dose of Christian hate, said Viscount Bennett, ex-Prime Minister of Canada, at a Warships Week meeting at Islington (London) yesterday.—*Scottish Daily Express.*

Councillor Hamilton thought the estimates were based on sound financial lines. While he was not whole-heartedly in favour of the purchase of the vacuum cleaner, he would waive his opposition to it in the hope that it would achieve the desired result. He should watch it very closely.—*Henley Standard.*

BULL HOTEL, GERRARDS CROSS, BUCKS.—It's wartime—but you won't know it!—Advt. in *Catholic Herald.*

MANY A MICKLE

ONE of the things that have surprised me most in the present spring, or winter, or whatever you call it, is the obedience of Englishmen to the injunction not to throw away their bus tickets. Normally, the Englishman believes that appeals for careful conduct are addressed, not to himself, but to other people. He has for many years past been urged not to throw cigarette cartons, chocolate papers and other litter on the grass borders of lanes in which he has stopped in his motor car with his wife and children to enjoy his Sunday lunch or tea. He has paid little attention to the request because he has never been able to see that all the cigarette cartons, chocolate wrappings, sandwich papers and orange peel that his family leaves by the wayside can make any difference. He knows that if a million people leave sandwich papers, beer bottles and lemonade bottles on one of the South Downs, the hill will look different from what it used to look in the days of Boadicea. He never dreams, however, that his own small contribution to the wilderness of papers and bottles is the cause of the ruin of the landscape. He is so modest that he feels that nothing that so small a man as he can do matters.

He has in the same way—though, I think, in a lessening degree—gone on with his bluebell-picking, his daffodil-picking, his bird's-nesting, and his butterfly-collecting. All these things are perfectly natural hobbies with nothing to be said against them except that, if they are carried too far, they are hostile to the general enjoyment of the too-brief life of other human beings. Collectors of butterflies have already exterminated, or nearly so, the Camberwell Beauty so that for most of us it is as dead as the dodo. As for wild daffodils, fewer and fewer of us see them every year except on the handlebars of raiders into the country on bicycles. The monomaniac who takes a clutch of rare bird's eggs from the hedge does not admit to himself that he is diminishing the race of rare birds in England. He probably loves birds and is in favour of preserving all their tribes, but he cannot believe that anything so unimportant a person as himself can do will make any difference.

That, I think, is the only rational explanation of the way in which, in spite of a thousand appeals in the newspapers and over the wireless, Englishmen have continued to throw litter in country lanes and on hillsides, have devastated bluebell woods and any other woods they could find during the week-end, and English children (educated at great expense and on the latest and most civilised theories) have gone on wrenching birds' nests from the hedges and collecting butterflies as though they were as numerous and as dead as postage stamps.

There are probably two reasons why the English have always been so wasteful of their national resources. One is that they are temperamentally individualists; and an individualist is a person who does not feel responsible for what happens to the community. The second is that they suspect thrift as a Puritan vice. Consider how that great man, Samuel Smiles—I have never read him—was abused by the intellectual Victorians because of what he said in favour of thrift in his book—I have never read it—*Self Help*. The natural English attitude to thrift, I think, is admirably summed up in Lord Chesterfield's sentence: "I knew once a covetous, sordid fellow who used to say: 'Take care of the pence, and the pounds will take care of themselves.'" The covetous, sordid fellow was, of course, right, as we who forgot to take care of the pence discovered as soon as the bank wrote to us about our first overdraft. But the philosophy of waste in which we were brought up—consider, for example, *The School for Scandal*—had by that time shaped our characters. We had by that time become confirmed wasters—or, if you prefer the word, wastrels—and lost all sense of personal responsibility in our treatment of bus-tickets, bluebells and bawbees.

There were, I admit, even in Victorian days, familiar mentors who preached the virtues of salvage. There was a rhyme that ran something like:

Dearly beloved brethren, is it not a sin
To eat a raw potato and throw away the skin?

But, if we did not waste the skins of new potatoes in those days it was because we liked eating them, not because we wanted, as we ought to have wanted, to save them for the hens and pigs. We also had money-boxes, but that was not for the pleasure of hoarding but for the pleasure of bursting them open with a chisel after a fortnight or three weeks and spending the money. In the same way, we salved bus tickets or tram tickets, but this was not from motives of economy, but because there was a Victorian myth that any child who collected so many thousands of tickets would be rewarded by the transport companies with as many hundreds of pounds. It was our love of money, not our sense of the duty of saving, that made us hold on to the ticket as we descended to the pavement. We had no more thought of thrift than the children of a later generation who collected cigarette pictures. We regarded economy as a vice and thought only of pleasure and money to spend.

This Victorian tradition, I think, still lingers. Even in wartime we find it difficult to believe, as the dismal minority of economists used to tell us, that economy on our part will make any difference to other people. Thus, it is said, many people who do not want to use their clothes coupons are so disinclined to waste them that they sell them to other people. A business man told me the other day that there is a roaring trade in clothes coupons in his factory. Few people in the factory apparently realise that the object of clothes rationing is to reduce imports in the general interest and that to sell clothes coupons is to waste space on ships that might be used for the import of food or munitions. The individualist, selling a few clothes coupons, feels that so small a transaction can make no difference to the conduct of the war. The old Sinn Féin motto, "It all depends on me," seems nonsense to him. He is as humble as the man with a single talent. That is the secret of half the wangling that goes on. It is difficult not to believe that it mostly depends on other people. I have believed this nearly all my life.

I think this sense of individual responsibility in trifles is one of the last things that ordinary human beings can be brought to take seriously. In the early days of the Sinn Féin movement, Irishmen were taught that every man who bought Irish boots instead of imported boots was a "nation-builder" and that it was a crime against the nation to buy clothes made of anything but Irish tweeds. Only a minority of Irishmen believed this, however, and that it was better to walk the streets in squeaking boots made at home than in the most comfortable footwear of America. To express patriotism by a vote seemed more natural than to express it in what one wore or in what one ate. Yet the situation in these islands to-day suggests that the old Sinn Féin theory was right, and that it is almost as important not to wangle clothes or food or petrol as not to vote on the wrong side. And not to waste—that great privilege of the nineteenth century. I am not a mathematician, but even I am impressed when I read the Ministry of Food announcement: "If every one of us could save a slice of bread each day—just one ounce—we should save 400,000 tons of shipping in a year, and who knows how many precious lives?" Even as I read this, however, I wonder how many people—including myself—will go to the trouble of saving a slice of bread a day. Most of us are still individualists, hoping to be kept safe through the efforts of other people.

As for bus tickets, we are behaving rather better about them. Luckily, it has become an offence to throw a bus ticket on the street, and we yield to compulsion. But if our better nature were merely appealed to and we were told that, if everybody saved all his bus tickets, they would result in the production of so many shell-cases in the course of a year, should we be such model citizens? I for one doubt it. You cannot without compulsion change a generation of wasters into a generation of savers in a day or a month. That is why I believe in compulsory saving. There is no other method of curbing the propensities of lifelong wasters like me.

Y. Y.

A STOP ON THE ROAD

We approached P . . . just before eleven. I knew the road well, but in the black-out there were no signs of the town. You sensed a black hill, you saw two lights from the railway junction and below them there was a cluster of stars which I took to be half a mile away—a signal box, say, a station platform or even a row of villas where the curtains had not been drawn, and which suddenly seemed to rise and strike like a gilded snake into mid-air and turned out to be a convoy of army trucks barely 50 yards off. "I'll say it's 10.47," the driver said. We turned the torch on the clock behind us. It said 10.46. "Not far wrong," he said. It was one of the card tricks of the road, this betting on the time. I suspected he had an illuminated wrist watch, but he hadn't. He and the man who took over at the half-way meet were never more than a minute wrong in a twelve-hour journey. My driver had been driving heavy stuff at night on the road for fourteen years.

We drove through P . . . watching our reflection bending and jumping ahead of us in the shop windows. Then we came to the new suburb on the western side. It cheered you up before the war, the driver said, to see the lights of a town. They warmed you and it gave you a sort of sad, empty feeling to leave them and pass on to the raw, animal darkness of the country; but now the darkness of towns is ranker and more primitive and the blackness of the country more civil. At this point he stopped talking and swung off the main road down a street of flimsy villas and in the middle of this genteel scene we came to a quarry and a camp of lorries drawn up by it. We had got to the Caff, the good Caff he had been talking about for the last hour. The proprietor was a "fiddler," that is he dealt in stolen food, and it was the only place for 150 miles where a hungry driver could be sure of getting real meat in his sandwich and a piece of cake that did not break his teeth. I believe everything I am told. The owner of the Caff had just done six months "inside," the driver said, and perhaps the place *was* filthy, and on some nights nothing but a brothel and thieves' kitchen, women pulling their skirts off and chairs flying about in a way that shocked even a broadminded lorry driver like him—but you could be sure of meat in your sandwich. The owner was not one of those bastards, the driver said, who sold out to convoys of troops or the riff-raff of the new aerodromes during the day and closed down at night. "Notice anything there?" said the driver when we walked past the parked lorries and giving me the first whiff of minor crime. A small car was parked between the lorries like a tick on a sheep. "A petrol fiddler," said the lorry driver. "He slips in at your tail and either buys the petrol off the driver or syphons it out of his tank while he's in the Caff." Lorry drivers are united against the petrol thief and against the driver who is a fiddler. The standard of honesty is very high, higher (they claim) than at the docks or on the railways. Among the possible explanations of this saintliness three are important: there is a great individual responsibility, the firms are mostly small, and in small firms there is close personal contact between owners and men.

Still, this Caff, and the beef like stewed gum boot that was brought out from a dirty box under the counter, was a monument to fiddling. *Sonny Boy's*—that is my name for it—was a shack falling to pieces and held together by patches of tin. It was 30 feet long. We had been in several Caffs that night, but they were smart places. This one was a sad, dim, reeking place lit in a ghastly yellow way by gas hissing in a broken mantle. A counter and what looked like three or four feet of rubbish—old tins, paper, boxes—heaped about a gas stove, was the kitchen, and the rain coming through the roof and running down the walls had stained and rusted everything. There was a sour stink of stale gas and old grease and tea dregs, an odour of ten years of frying, smoking, tea-stewing, tobacco-chewing, of spitting, paraffin and armpits; on the table in the middle of the room, a piece of board four feet long and about fifteen inches wide, were the sloppings of the night's teas. Everything in the room was broken. The gas mantle was broken, the cups and saucers were cracked, there were rusted, empty and broken slot machines against the walls, and broken sections of cinema seats with the plush on them ripped and frayed. The floor had collapsed in places, the corrugated iron roof had to be propped up. Three people were sitting there silently when we came in and they seemed to be broken also. One was a young girl dozing on the table with her golden hair in the tea slops, whose thin back jerked violently as if it were broken, too, when she coughed. She coughed herself upright and awake and looked drunkenly at a middle-aged woman with a shopping bag, who said, in a genteel accent: "Come on, duckie, let's get crackin'."

"F . . . that," the girl said thickly, and her head fell lower and lower until she was asleep in the tea dregs again. The girl was the waitress.

"She's done in," the woman whined. And then the third person came forward, the proprietor, a pale and soapy lag in his incompetent sixties, the essential, incurable small crook, with the small pious blue eyes, the spongy body and woman's arms of a bishop gone to seed. Furtive and eccentric, full of uplift about his duty to the boys on the road, he stood wiping his hands on his singlet and scratching the grey hairs on his chest. My driver was a respectable fellow with a son taking piano lessons, and another with a scholarship at a secondary school; but in the Caffs his appearance changed. On came the poker face of the lorry driver, the blatant, quizzical eye, the lackadaisical hope that somewhere, somehow, trouble would crop up. He sat down beside the girl, opened her handbag and pulled out a book. She woke up at once and snatched the bag back.

"Reading?" he jeered. "Didn't know you had the brain."

"Where's those fags?—you said you was bringing fags," the girl said stupidly.

"Where was you last night," accused the driver.

But her head was dropping. "Roll on Christmas," she said. We watched her head slowly go down to the table. The old woman got up, pulled the girl to her feet and led her out of the place.

"'Night all," said the driver ironically.

The girl woke up enough to tell him what to do with himself. "Very sweet, oh, very sweet," said the driver, immensely satisfied. And her cough was the last we heard of her.

The place was empty. The proprietor was talking in an innocent, rambling, yet very shrewd, mad way about his right to fry fish without the Council's permission. The place was a plague, you could see, to the people in the villas. The noise of the heavy lorries must have made their ornaments dance. Then, suddenly, the Caff filled. You saw the fascination of the road then. It was like a novel; the Caffs were the chapters. We had seen all these men two hours earlier. There was Tich, six feet six, with his idiotic grin, his habit of waltzing round the room with imaginary partners, and the lewd gestures of his driving gloves. Tich spotted me at once. He had named me "Ten-pound-a-week" at a place 30 miles back. ("Earns ten pound a week watching us earn five"). There was a sentimental man from the South who liked to recall the perfect mates he had had in his time, real pals who made up a bed for him in the lorry and brought him a cup of tea in the morning. There was Skinny who, between talk, would not stop rattling off an imitation wireless commentary—"Now Schneider drives it right down, the Maple Leaf are on to it, Brown sends it out to Evans, Evans races past Macgregor, and can he run, oh, boy, what a centre! What a pass!"—from which he would wake, up and, meeting the stare of the chaps sitting at the table, would begin the favourite opening of the drivers: "What the bleeding hell you got that so-and-so look on your so-and-so mug?"

First came the swearing duels, then the stories, then the disputes. This is a male society and the most important thing is to keep your end up. Conversation is a sort of cockfight with a happy ending. Someone switched on the wireless:

"What's that?" "That's bloody music." "That's not bloody music. That's a jane singing."

The speaker rises to his feet.

"Shut that bloody jane off."

"It's the Lord's Prayer."

"That's not the Lord's Prayer. It's bloody Hitler."

—a blasphemous altercation followed by: "You don't know the Lord's Prayer." "Who's the bastard says I don't know the so-and-so Lord's Prayer!" The two shout in each other's faces. They bring their faces nearer and nearer till they are nearly touching, they raise their fists. The first man to blink wins. But lorry drivers do not seem to be able to blink. Failing to win any ground, they satirically sit down, a grin comes on their faces, they murmur something more about bastards and think up a new interlude.

The lorry drivers, who sat or stood in a phalanx together, all got their share of Tich's satire. Tich had all the scandal, all the stories of tarts and police, all the messages from women, all the dance tunes, all the smut, all the theories and all the news. He had brought his butt with him, a scowling simpleton with a swollen face, a look of toothache and a mouth so wide open that his tongue and his lips seemed to be pouring out of his face. This man was born to be annoyed; he lived from rage to rage. Tich's art was to goad him on from one frenzy to another. Anything would do.

"Give us a fag."

"What? Think I'd bloody well give you a fag."

"You got some fags at Dolly's."

The man's face contorted. He'd never been near Dolly's. "We seen you," said Tich. "Didn't we?" The butt shouted he didn't know who Dolly was. Tich worked him until he'd got him shouting and bursting on his feet; then let him drop again and quietly pinched his tea and cake while his back was turned and put them under the table. Toothache gaped at his empty place and slowly stood up full of murder. Presently, after this had died down, and when Toothache wasn't looking, Tich put the tea and cake back, put a spoonful of sugar into the cup from his own private store—kept in a liver salt tin—and added a couple of sandwiches to the cake. The two men gazed with an expression of deep satisfaction at each other.

Tich was the natural producer, the natural owner and retailer of secrets, the born annoyance and card. He had a long-nosed, dachshund face and he scented everything. He looked round the Caff quickly and all the drivers had spotted what he had spotted when he said in a suddenly quiet voice, with a faint nod to the dark end of the room: "What's up? Someone cracked a crib?"

At the further end of the room and all bending over a table and whispering together were a group of smarties in high-shouldered and tight-waisted coats. They were part of the underworld of P . . . so the driver said. I believe everything. Especially when one got up and, swaggering to the counter, ordered a cup of tea and pulled about fifty dirty pound notes out of his pocket when he came to pay. The proprietor was combing his streaks of white hair in the mirror of the broken cash register; he appeared to be using the mirror to study the room. A gypsy came in, slim as a gun, and an Air Force sergeant, in the ecstatic state of drunkenness, gazed with adoration at the gypsy. Presently the sergeant came up to the gypsy and began to stroke his naked arm and whisper.

"Listen to this," said Tich. He had a letter in his hand. It had been given him by a driver with a death mask face, a man whose cheeks looked as though they were carved out of wood. He looked angular, a dead man, as though starvation or cruelty in his childhood had fixed him for ever in this state. The most horrible thing about him was a match stick which stuck between his front teeth.

They all gathered round the man's letter.

"Cor, that's nasty," they said. "That's short and that's nasty."

They repeated it and they laughed. "'I wish,'" my driver read out loud, "'I wish you was the invisible man.' That *is* nasty." The owner of the letter watched with the unsmiling satisfaction of one who has made a contribution.

Visibly prouder because the woman's insulting letter to him had been seen by many eyes, the death mask took it back.

"Here! Air Force! Come over here." The gypsy was calling the sergeant to the door. He stumbled, still in ecstasy, and was propped up by the gypsy against the wall. "Stay there," said the gypsy.

"There's something up to-night," my driver whispered. "We'll get cracking."

Perhaps there was. Perhaps there was not. I don't know.

We drove away. Benighted soldiers signalled for a lift. We changed drivers at the rendezvous, which was on the open road, not at a town or even a Caff. There was nothing to mark the spot. The distant

head lights flashed their signal—that was all. No more tea, no more Caffs now till half-past four. We shook up the sleeping towns, raking the simple rural windows with our awful noise. That's the Scannell, the new driver said, pointing to a distant prick of red. It was. The signals flashed as we passed. That was a landmark, the new driver said, when the Home Guard was there. I looked out but saw nothing. We froze as we crossed the hills and the walls of the woods were ghostlier for the hard whistle of our tyres.

V. S. PRITCHETT

THREE SHOWS

To have made progress during these last years an artist must be capable of living, as an artist should, for and by his art: Ivon Hitchens has made more than progress, he has made a leap forward. Always a sure and personal colourist, or, to use a better because more significant term, harmonist, he seemed in the past sometimes a little uncertain of what he wanted to do. The harmonic theme was developed tastefully, beautifully even, but there seemed to be no particular reason why it should begin or end at any particular point. Occasionally one was tempted to think that the frame alone imposed the form. In this exhibition at the Leicester Galleries there is no excuse for such thoughts. The artist uses just enough representation to indicate a state of mind: "flowers," he says unobtrusively, and, having said, makes the picture an affair entirely between himself and his feeling for those particular flowers. The statement of the theme suffices to put the spectator at ease, no longer will he find the slightest difficulty in following the design through all its ramifications; precisely what its value to the artist may be is a more subtle and interesting question. Probably, to put the matter crudely, it keeps him straight. Anyhow, those pictures in which it is most clearly, albeit unemphatically, announced (Nos. 132, 133, 134, 145, 147, 149) are the best in a very good collection. The least overstatement would seem to be fatal; and in No. 137, where the artist has been anxious to give us facts about the movement of a girl's body, he comes as near banality as a thoughtful artist can. One or two failures amongst five-and-twenty works is not much to complain of.

In the entrance gallery (still at the Leicester) is a remarkable collection of drawings by old masters—remarkable for beauties and remarkable for surprises. Whatever critics may find to say against this show they cannot say that it is commonplace. To attempt to do justice to such a treat—for a treat it is—in the few lines at my disposal would be an impertinence. Here is a morning's pleasure for anyone who cares for visual art, and for him who dabbles in the delightful game of attribution, fun for a month. Neither should students miss this opportunity for profitable study. No. 31, for instance, is a chalk drawing of Christ at the column attributed to Foppa. It has been badly rubbed, and some fool has thought to mend matters by strengthening the lower part with a pencilled outline. To compare this brutal yet feeble addition with the tremulous delicacy of the upper part will give the student—for all that the figure is minute—a better notion of the difference between good drawing and bad than anything he is likely to hear at the Academy schools or the Slade.

We meet Hitchens again at Miller's in Lewes High Street, and find him in excellent company—Duncan Grant, Mathew Smith, Coldstream, Pasmore, Rogers, Moynihan, Vanessa Bell, Frances Hodgkins, Quentin Bell, Caroline Lucas and Keith Baynes. The little gallery—and once again it is a pleasant duty to congratulate the organisers on the tasteful and intelligent way in which they have made use of their space—is dominated by a panel of six paintings by Duncan Grant. Here is another who has not suffered circumstance to get the better of his talent. It is not to be supposed, however, that he reduces his colleagues to silence: three pictures by Vanessa Bell hold their own admirably. Pasmore contributes an important work which, to the best of my belief, has not been seen before. Also it has been pushed a good deal further than anything he has shown us of late. The solitary Coldstream, an early work, provokes some curious reflections. The exhibition, even in these days, is worth a journey by train.

CLIVE BELL

THE MOVIES

"Design for Scandal," at the Regal
"The Man Who Came Back," at the London Pavilion

The memorable films, as critics are always insisting, are made by directors and not by syndicates. Yet along certain lines the Hollywood syndicate can move very smoothly and effectively. *Design for Scandal* is brisk, titivating, gay. Who directed it? Someone or other, junior; and perhaps everyone on the list, down to the expert who designed Miss Russell's dresses, deserves credit. It is a stock piece designed to flicker for a week and to be replaced by a similar piece in two months' time. But what fun while it lasts! The actors enjoy being very much themselves. Rosalind Russell, as a divorce court judge with romantic leanings on holiday, captivates as usual; in her case wit seems to accompany charm, whatever the level of the script. Walter Pidgeon is the plotting journalist who is paid to frame her and makes love at the same time. Edward Arnold is a delectable boss, always goaded, always on the point of losing his thousands to a blonde whom he has to chase round a table. There are, too, female friends, comic sculptors, outraged butlers, and this is the sort of film in which even the taxi-man, making a one-minute appearance, can add to the gaiety. *Design for Scandal*, let me add, would vanish if you began to think about it, but it shakes out a row of cocktails.

The last film by Jean Renoir seen in London was *La Bête Humaine*, revived for Piccadilly audiences with the appalling title *Judas Was a Woman*. Hollywood in welcoming this brilliant director to its ranks has shown itself considerably less vulgar; indeed, *The Man Who Came Back* is respectable, strong and glum. There are a few impressive scenes of an outlaw in the Georgian swamps, and some moments of tense brutality, but otherwise one would hardly recognise the touch even of a Renoir disciple. Precisely the same thing has happened to Renoir as happened to other French directors who have crossed the Atlantic: he has gone tame. Why? Since books can be produced in exile, why not films? The answer would seem to be that a Frenchman can't remain himself when everyone else on the set and in the conference room is American. That is understandable. But it should not be past the wit of Hollywood to find a way out. I suggest two possibilities: either the formation, with nostalgic or purely highbrow aims, of a French school (Clair, Duvivier and others are there, wasting their talents), or collaboration with American directors. Clair and Chaplin, for example, have a great deal in common and have cribbed generously from one another in the past; it should not be impossible for them to work together, on at least one film. And it might even help Chaplin to reduce his incubation period from five years to two!

WILLIAM WHITEBAIT

PLAYS AND PICTURES

"Skylark," at the Duchess Theatre

Slight, slick, diverting American comedy. Mr. Samson Raphaelson neatly outlines his characters, offers them good scenes, telling lines, and bothers little about a theme. The triangle this time is formed by a man, his wife and his business; comes the usual cry "Choose between us"; and he avoids the dilemma by providing her with a lover—in the shape of a baby to adopt. Acting could hardly be better. Miss Constance Cummings, as pretty as a film-star, has both animation and repose; Mr. John Clements gives an uncommonly humorous performance as the husband. Mr. Hugh Sinclair almost steals the play by fine acting; in rather a thin part he suggests a greater reality of feeling than any of the others. Our only complaint is that Miss Valerie Taylor has not more to do. She sails in, looking a mixture of Hedda Gabler and Anna Karenina; then reveals herself a Ziegfield cutie as tough as an overcooked steak. Miss Renée Gadd, Messrs Lloyd Pearson, John Miller, Henry Longhurst and Henry Morrell—all are excellent. Indeed we have never previously seen an English cast so completely at home in an American play. Particular credit must go to the producers, Messrs. Benn Levy and William Armstrong.

Correspondence

ANGLO-AMERICAN UNION

SIR,—Those acquainted with the United States will be aware of the force of a latent isolationism which, in that country, as in Canada, and, indeed, in this country also, is only too likely to reassert its power after this war. American isolationism, however, of the Jeffersonian tradition must not be misunderstood. It was not strong enough to prevent the U.S. Senate voting by a majority (although not by the required two-thirds majority) in favour of joining the League after the last war. Moreover, it is always hemispheric rather than national; and its attitude historically towards the British Commonwealth must be very sharply distinguished from its hostile attitude towards Great Britain alone, or towards Europe or Geneva. If we are to mould policy, as is sometimes officially suggested, by deferring to or appeasing this isolationism—which exploits the antipathies of U.S. immigrants imperfectly assimilated by "the melting-pot" or the very mixed nationalities of the British Dominions—then it follows that a hushed silence must overcome all suggestions for reviving the League or I.L.O. with its capital in an alien Europe.

A *Fortune* poll showed 30,000,000 of the American sovereign people in favour of some kind of union of the United States with the free democracies, and six per cent. in favour of full federal union of the United States and the British Commonwealth. Any politician would be very satisfied if he could count such figures in his favour. The U.S. Secretary of the Interior, Mrs. Roosevelt and Mr. Willkie have also declared themselves in the same general sense. In this country I have just returned from speaking on this subject, with local mayors as chairmen, to audiences in South Wales packed, standing and with some turned away—an experience fully as reassuring to me as the qualified endorsement given to my proposals for the foundation of Anglo-Saxony as *one* nucleus of world federation, in *one Anglo-American Nation*, by nine Ministers and ex-Ministers, the new Archbishop of Canterbury and the late President of the T.U.C.

Full constitutional federation is almost certainly premature. A basis in the affirmation of a wider commonwealth with common citizenship will be found (as it was in Australia despite the politicians) by the will of the common people. Naturally, the fusion of an ancient kingdom with a young republic will not come without pains and opposition. Neither will that U.S.S.E.—that Union of the Socialist Republics of Europe—which we also desire and shall see. Most men, yet, if compelled to choose between Vansittartism (the answer to Goebbels' prayer) and Pollitt, will choose Pollitt. But these ends for securing peace and justice will not be prevented by a few highly placed capitalists or eyeless and visionless Conservatives, who choose to set themselves against the establishment of a polity based, as Mr. Winant said, on the affirmation of a common free tradition open to all nations—men who will doubtless be superseded in due course. The time for timid official counsels has gone by.

GEORGE CATLIN

POET AND PREMIER

SIR,—You have trained your readers to such scrupulous critical standards that there must have been more gasps than mine at the odd statement (March 28) by Mr. G. W. Stonier that (considering Kipling as a poet) "it is perhaps worth remembering he was first cousin of Lord Baldwin, most disastrous and null of our Prime Ministers."

One hopes in fairness to our poets that the mistaken opinions of their uncles, aunts or even first cousins are *not* "worth remembering" in marshalling reasons against their literary merits.

MUIRHEAD BONE

A. E. HOUSMAN

SIR,—Mr. Grant Richards's recently published volume *Housman*, 1897–1936, has been greeted in many quarters (though not in your columns) as a book which, by reason of the friendship which subsisted between its author and its subject, may be expected to carry especial weight with students of Housman's life and work. For the benefit of such students, and without any wish to disparage Mr. Richards's effort,

may I put on record the view that the slighter sketch written by Mr. A. S. F. Gow, and published by the Cambridge University Press in 1936, gives a truer and in essentials a fuller picture of Housman as a scholar, a poet, and a man?

In particular, I would commend Mr. Gow's treatment (p. 49) of the difficult subject of Housman's temperament and the source of inspiration of his poems of affection, by contrast with the somewhat laboured attempt in Chapter XXXIV of Mr. Richards's book to clear Housman's memory of the imputation of an emotional attitude towards his own sex which Mr. Richards apparently regards as necessarily associated with "sin and crime."

In this connection may I call attention to a parallel or echo in Housman's work which is omitted from the list, otherwise apparently exhaustive, of "Reminiscences" comprised in Mr. Richards's Appendix II? It occurs in a poem, of which I can find no mention in Mr. Richards's book, the first two verses of which run as follows:—

Oh, who is that young sinner with the handcuffs on his wrists,
And what has he been after that they groan and shake their fists?
And wherefore is he wearing such a conscience-stricken air?
Oh, they're taking him to prison for the colour of his hair.
'Tis a shame to human nature, such a head of hair as his.
In the good old time 'twas hanging for the colour that it is.
Though hanging is not bad enough, and flaying would be fair,
For the *nameless* and *abominable* colour of his hair.

Mr. Richards must have wondered what was the "sin or crime," condemnation of which evoked from Housman such indignant satire. The answer is, I think, to be found in the words I have italicised in the above quotation, which are echoes of traditional legal phraseology. Light may be thrown on Housman's choice of the word "*nameless*" by reference to 2 Rot. Parl. 332 a No. 58 (50 Edw. III), where the practice there in question is called "*un trop horrible vice q ne fait pas à nomer*," and to Coke, who says (3 Inst: 58-9) that it is "amongst Christians *not to be named*," adding, "these words are in the usual indictment of the offence." "*Abominable*" has the same association: see the preamble to 25 Hen. 8 c. 6 (which statute first made the practice a felony) and 24 & 25 Vict. c. 100 s. 61 (Offences against the Person Act) which, in replacing the statute of Henry VIII, retained the word thus traditionally associated with its subject-matter.

Another echo of this phraseology (and one with which Housman was himself doubtless familiar) occurs in Chapter XLIV of Book IV of Gibbon's *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*: "I touch with reluctance, and dispatch with impatience, a more odious vice, of which modesty *rejects the name*, and nature *abominates* the idea."

Fuller reference to the statutes mentioned above will afford an explanation of the words "In the good old time 'twas hanging for the colour that it is."

JOHN SPARROW

BITTER-ENDERS

SIR,—My attention has been drawn to the article "Bitter-Enders" in your issue for March 28, which makes reference to *John Bull*.

I have no doubt that the quotation of what Fritsche said is correct, but it deliberately misrepresents what appeared in *John Bull*; in fact, our policy is most definitely the reverse.

Cutting of the article is enclosed, and, if you agree that we have been misrepresented by the Nazis to suit their propaganda, I should be grateful if you could put the matter right in your next issue, because we are most anxious it should not be thought that we support what has come to be known as the Vansittart policy.

J. WILLIAMSON,
Editor, *John Bull*

[The article attached makes a clear distinction between the Nazi rulers and the German people, and urges plans for "the emergence in Germany of men of honour and understanding." The Nazi broadcast quoted in "Bitter-Enders" misrepresented *John Bull*, and we regret having quoted it without rectifying the impression.—ED., "N.S. & N."]

FREEDOM FROM WANT

SIR,—Sir William Beveridge's broadcast on the night of Sunday, March 22nd, was not very reassuring on the question of the establishment of individual security after the war.

Few will seriously contest his point that total war implies the total wholetime effort of each citizen, but Sir William showed a complete misunderstanding of the position in which many individuals are placed when he put forward his plea that no one should allow his personal interests, preparations for post-war activities, or fears for his future to interfere in any way with his war effort.

A small trader or small business man is, with the best intentions, unable to give undivided loyalty to the war effort while security of employment is still denied to him and only referred to in nebulous terms as a matter which is engaging the attention of the Government.

By the small business man I refer mainly to the man who has to find up to, say, £700 per week in wages. I come within this category, and while I and my partners are responsible for finding this weekly wages cheque, we are forced to give primary consideration to profits, in order to ensure that those profits shall not only enable us to meet our weekly commitments, but shall cover all foreseeable and unforeseeable contingencies, both probable and improbable. To ensure this our operations must be conducted with first consideration to profits and only secondary consideration to the necessities of speeding up war supplies. We are in fact constrained to do many things for the sake of profit which operate against the immediate interests of war production and to leave undone many things which would help war production.

If we are to take greater risks and to give less attention to the stability of our financial position, we need a definite assurance that the provision of suitable work for both ourselves and for our employees is going to be the definite concern of the State.

Sir William Beveridge's vague references to the matter of post-war security left me with the impression that the Government's idea of providing the citizen with security was to introduce measures for the extension of the present unemployment insurance. If this is so, we cannot be too early or too insistent in convincing the Government that a scheme of this nature will not meet the case, nor will it help to relieve the present serious drag on the production of war supplies.

No insurance scheme can offer the individual more than a bare subsistence income considered in relation to his earning capacity. Further, all self-respecting men want to be assured of a livelihood through employment. To live at the expense of the country without fully contributing to the services of the country according to our several capacities is not a "new order" for which we are hoping, nor does it satisfy our ideas of implementing the "freedom from fear" clause of the Atlantic Charter.

What the country is looking for and expecting is the entire elimination of unemployment and not merely the elimination of the worst features of a starvation existence for men and women willing and able to work. This does not seem to me overmuch to ask of civilised society. It is certainly the minimum necessary for giving the citizen freedom from fear and ensuring for the State the full and happy co-operation of its members in the efforts of both war and peace.

MAJOR A. H. BROCKHURST
Long Barn, Rowlands Avenue,
Hatch End, Middlesex.

Mulk Raj Anand

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Constable

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BOOKS IN GENERAL

YES, novels of the last two hundred years provide a wonderfully vivid and varied panorama of English domestic life. But if a Chinese sociologist depended only upon them for his knowledge of the national character, would he not fall into some odd delusions? Just as the French are less wicked than their novelists have painted them, and the Russians less poetical, so the English are less childlike. In the nineteenth century, at any rate, which was the great period of the European novel, almost all English novelists worked with an eye cocked on the schoolgirl. Nothing must be written that might dispel her ignorance; or it may be truer to say that the Victorian female, though a wife and many times a mother, was expected to retain the dewy ignorance of the schoolroom. One can hardly exaggerate the hardship that Mrs. Grundy imposed upon our novelists. What masterpieces we might have boasted if Thackeray and Dickens had enjoyed the same freedom as Balzac and Zola, Dostoievski and Tolstoy! A second disadvantage must also be noticed. Some of the French novelists whom we now most admire had a very small public when alive—Stendhal, Mérimée, Flaubert; but almost all the most gifted English were immensely successful. And their success made them wish either to gratify the taste of their public or—what was equally disastrous—to improve its morals. Thackeray, Dickens, Charles Reade, Trollope, George Eliot—which of them would even claim to be a disinterested artist?

Such are the reflections excited by Mr. L. A. G. Strong's new anthology.* This is a most enjoyable book, containing extracts from forty-eight novelists, beginning with Richardson and Fielding and ending with Rosamond Lehmann and Norman Collins. As Mr. Strong admits in a very modest and too short foreword, such a set of choices must be partial and arbitrary, for fifty such anthologies could be compiled without overlapping. I think that he starts very badly, for the extract from *Clarissa* is calculated to prevent anyone reading that exquisite and absorbing novel: I also think that one or two of the more modern passages are unworthy and could advantageously have been replaced by quotations from James, Moore, Mr. Forster, and Mrs. Woolf. But Mr. Strong has done a difficult job extremely well, and his selections throw light on the development both of English society and the English novel.

From the first, class differences have been the mainstay of the English novelist. They are immensely important, indeed, in the imaginative literature of all countries, from A for Aeschylus to Z for Zoshchenko. Stendhal and Balzac are immensely concerned with them. But the English remain the most class-conscious people with which I am acquainted, and for a long while moreover the taboo on illicit love made the English novelist's preoccupation with class specially conspicuous. Already *Pamela* and *Clarissa* are both concerned with a contest between love and class-consciousness. *Evelina* is the story of a girl's fear that her grandmother's vulgarity may prevent her own marriage with a peer. (It is odd that Miss Austen, in her first published novel, written when *Evelina* was still highly popular, should have followed, so much more brilliantly, the same pattern. Darcy's meeting with the Gardiners is very similar to Orville's call at Madam Duval's house). And so it goes on. Here is a queer testimonial to the upper classes:

> The armoury led to a large and lofty octagonal chamber, highly decorated, in the centre of which was the tomb of Lothair's grandfather. He had raised it in his lifetime. The tomb was of alabaster surrounded by a railing of pure gold, and crowned with a recumbent figure of the deceased in his coronet . . . What charmed Lothair most as he proceeded were the number of courts and quadrangles in the castle, all of bright and fantastic architecture, and each of which was a garden, glowing with brilliant colours, and gay with the voice of fountains or the forms of gorgeous birds.

This might be a description of a Maharajah embellishing his capital with a Gothic palace. It has no relation to the domestic life of the English aristocracy. When Disraeli wrote *Lothair* (in 1869), he had been Prime Minister, and knew as well as anyone how noblemen lived. But he knew also how he would like them to live; and the simpler members of middle-class public, one presumes, accepted his fairy-tale as a faithful account by an eye-witness. The picture has historical value, in fact, because it shows the sort of daydream that a large part of the electorate shared with the Tory leader.

The modern baronet may not "extend the tips of his fingers," as Sir Frederick does in the extract from Albert Smith's *Life and Adventures of Christopher Tadpole* (a book I confess I do not know); even the visiting cards that caused such perplexity to Kipps are well on their way to oblivion; but the English continue to push upwards as obdurately as the vegetation in a tropical forest. The last extract in the book, from Norman Collins's *Love in Our Time*, shows a suburban wife burdening her husband with monthly payments for the current symbols of class superiority, the radiogram and the refrigerator.

Victorian life, for the more prosperous classes, was safe beyond anything else known to history. Neither men nor machines offered any threat. Though one member of the family might die of a decline or a putrid fever, it must have been common to go through life without once experiencing instant danger of death. The novelist, therefore, hard put to it to find the ingredients of excitement, had to overwork certain unusual accidents; and his heroines were distinguished by the frequency with which they were cut off by the tide, tumbled into mill-pools and fell foul of poachers. Money troubles provided a more plausible occasion for suspense. Banks were always failing, wills being lost, mortgages falling due. (Brought up on Victorian fiction, I thought as a child that to foreclose a mortgage was as villainous an act as to forge a will.) Mr. Strong naturally avoids such sensational disasters, since he deals with the novel as a mirror of domestic life. From his pages a composite picture emerges of grandees superb in their equipages, of sweated tailors in fetid cellars, of babies born blind, of christenings and oppressed governesses and tearful weddings, of footmen bringing in lamps, and of what sometimes seems the chief source of Victorian pleasure, a self-complacent surrender to the thrills of bereavement.

Then, of course, there was food. Perhaps because rationing has sharpened our interest in this subject, Mr. Strong indulges us with a series of repasts—Mr. Jorrocks's dinner with the Muleygrubs', Mr. Dombey's "cold collation, set forth in a cold pomp of glass and silver, and looking more like a dead dinner lying in state than a social occasion," Kit Nubbles' dozens of oysters, the Forsyte saddle of mutton and Sir Willoughby Patterne's port. "'We cannot always be eating—can we?' Mrs. Proudie remarked. 'No,' said Lord Dumbello, 'not always.' And he looked as though he lamented that his powers should be so circumscribed." The Victorians seem to have found in greed, as in grief, a substitute for less licit forms of self-indulgence.

The extent of the revolution that persons still alive have witnessed is most evident in the treatment of women and children. Bulwer Lytton described his Lady Florence as "courageous even to a want of feminacy." What a sad lack of feminacy he would have found in Englishwomen a year ago! Were Victorian women effectively trained to be sincere cowards, one wonders, or did they merely affect cowardice to flatter their men? David Copperfield's Dora was the ideal—"My poor little wife was in such affliction when she thought I should be annoyed, and in such a state of joy when she found I was not." The distortion of sentiment caused by such an ideal does not bear contemplation.

> Amabel, of course, went with her parents. Poor child! her tears flowed freely on the way, and Mr. Edmondstone, now that it had really come to the point of parting with his little Amy, was very much overcome, while his wife, hardly refraining from tears, could only hold her daughter's hand very close.
>
> The regular morning service was a great comfort, by restoring their tranquillity, and by the time it was ended, Amabel's countenance had settled into its own calm expression of trust and serenity. She scarcely even trembled when her father led her forward; her hand did not shake, and her voice, though very low, was firm and audible; while Guy's deep, sweet tones had a sort of thrill and quiver of intense feeling. No one could help observing that Laura was the most agitated person present; she trembled so much that she was obliged to lean on Charlotte, and her tears gave the infection to the other bridesmaids . . .

This extract from Charlotte Yonge's *The Heir of Redclyffe*, can be accepted as straight realism. The Victorians did behave and feel like this—but, largely, I believe, because novelists suggested that they ought to. There has been endless discussion of the novel as a reflection of life, and not nearly enough about life as a reflection of the novel. It would be difficult to over-estimate the extent to which during the last hundred years men and, even more, women have derived from fiction our knowledge of life. Not only their opinions but their sentiments are deeply coloured by this form of vicarious experience. Charlotte Yonge's books, in particular, because they were thought eminently suitable for the young person, succeeded in imposing upon Victorian girls a model of behaviour and feeling. Some of my friends, who dote upon Miss Yonge (being happily emancipated from her ferule), will be indignant when I condemn this model as pernicious and demoralising. But I consider that such writers excited what was called "the weaker sex" to exploit their presumed weakness—to be uncandid, ostentatiously cowardly and submissive. Charlotte Brontë (born seven years earlier) and Meredith (born five years later) held up in vain a less ignoble ideal—they did not, till much later, penetrate to the school-room. Even in Edwardian days, as Miss Delafield shows, a well-bred girl "would not have been encouraged to read the newspaper even had she wished to do so, and it would have been bad manners to read a book unless her mother had also been doing the same."

How remote it all seems! Only the context explains to us what the novelist means when he says that "countless compos swealed," when he describes a man wearing "gun-cases" or "thunder-and-lightning" cloth. Nor do I know what a "Dundee table" may have been. The beastliness of the modern world may sometimes make one wish to have been born in the Forties, but only on condition that one was born a male in a prosperous family—and also, I think, that one could spend a good deal of one's life on the Continent! The Victorian air, as it rises from the pages of this fascinating book, is stuffy with the smells of mutton, of starched aprons, of polished brass, of women who take no exercise.

A final point about, not the domestic life, but the novelists who described it. How lamentably lacking in style most of the quotations are when they come from authors born later than 1812. Sterne and Goldsmith, Miss Austen and Peacock wrote exquisitely. Even so subsidiary a novelist as Emily Eden, born in 1797, is elegantly pointed. But Reade and Trollope, the Kingsleys and Charlotte Yonge, Galsworthy and Arnold Bennett and Hugh Walpole—with all their merits, they pour forth prose that is muddy, unmelodious, mechanical. The stuffy, over-furnished, ponderously curtained rooms they describe are reflected in the staleness, shapelessness and verbosity of the language. Never a fresh or soaring image, never a sentence that tempts one to dwell upon it, never a cadence that lingers in the ear. Having done your duty by them, and paid the homage they deserve, you escape into the pages of Turgeniev as into a shabby but beautifully proportioned room with a window open upon a moonlit garden, from which come the sounds of distant music and the scent of the syringas.

RAYMOND MORTIMER

* *English Domestic Life During the Last 200 years.* An anthology selected from the novelists. By L. A. G. STRONG. *Allen and Unwin*, 7s. 6d.

MISS EDITH SITWELL

Street Songs. By EDITH SITWELL. *Macmillan.* 3*s.* 6*d.*

In a recent review in the *New Statesman and Nation*, Mr. Edwin Muir remarked that whereas the youngest generation of poets seemed content to reflect a consciousness of split personality, some of the older poets of the middle-aged generation were writing their best work. This is perhaps due to the fact that for those who are too old to be called up, the war has, oddly enough, created a somewhat artificial lull. They have little to do with the war directly, which, at the same time, is sufficiently absorbing to enable them to forget themselves and write more selflessly than previously. Perhaps the war acts like that treatment of certain types of insanity which, by giving the patient a violent shock, integrates his scattered personality and brings him to his senses. However this may be, Mr. Richard Church, Mr. Robert Graves, Mr. T. S. Eliot, and Mr. Muir himself, all seem to be writing poetry which is amongst their best and most serious work. Lastly, there is this new volume of poems by Edith Sitwell, which certainly contains some of the best poems she has written.

The war, Europe, poverty, social conditions, provide a thread of suffering which runs through all these poems, linking them up with a macabre strain which has often been present in Miss Sitwell's fantasies. The subjective in her work has been objectified by external events, such as air raids, which are as fantastic as anything she has ever written.

The whole volume shows a remarkable variety, and to describe it one would have to comment on each poem separately. Miss Sitwell is a very literary artist, and, original as many of her effects have been, her hold on what is peculiarly her own is always precarious, limited, and at times has even been superficial. In this volume she is sufficiently strengthened to be able to discard most affectations, and she emerges as a writer full of echoes and greatly influenced by other poets, whose language has been assimilated into her own. The last poem in the book, "An Old Woman," is Tennysonian; another—one of the best—recalls Christina Rossetti:

> For withering my heart, that summer rose,
> Comes another heart like a sun,—
> And it drank all the dew from the rose, my love,
> And the birds have forgotten their song
> That sounded all summer long, my dear—
> All the bright summer long.

Beautiful as this is, I like still more the "Serenade: Any Man to Any Woman," with its mysterious yet most relevant opening:

> Dark angel who art clear and straight
> As cannon shining in the air,
> Your blackness doth invade my mind
> And thunderous as the armoured wind
> That rained on Europe is your hair;
>
> And so I love you till I die—
> (Unfaithful I, the cannon's mate):
> Forgive my love of such brief span,
> But fickle is the flesh of man,
> And death's cold puts the passion out.

Here Miss Sitwell's power of quotation is shown at its best. In the first poem, on the raids, 1940, it approaches the pretentious. I do not think there is any poem in English that could bear easily the weight of having Marlowe's "O Ile leap up to my God: who pulls me downe," etc., inserted into it. Yet Miss Sitwell introduces this. Nor am I entirely convinced by the two lines about Christ:

> Blind as the nineteen hundred and forty nails
> Upon the Cross.

This conceit is certainly effective, and it is difficult to state my objection to it. I think that once poetry steps over the borderline into religious mysticism, a new set of questions are raised for the reader, such as: "Is the writer entitled to use this kind of language?"

The poignancy of this poetry is often caused by the contrast between the harsh reality of the present and the brightness of the past:

> Yet once, in spring, men's hearts forgot that they are cold,
> And shone like many suns—the dust seemed old,
> No more a king, and powerless to hold
> Endurance, hope, the loved and youthful smile.

The fact that the contrast is really between harsh objectivity and subjective fantasy, rather than between anything that really existed in the past and the present, does not detract from its truth. The poet was undoubtedly able to cling to an aristocratic vision which has now been shattered, and which was perfectly genuine as far as it went. Now this is postponed until the future:

> The thought of a world and a day
> When all may be possible, still come my way.
>
> As I walk the long roads of hot gold
> In the summer, when no-one is cold.

This is not false, but there is a touch of the unreal when Miss Sitwell goes too far outside her dreams of a better world:

> The shade, the only comfort of the slums,
> The lost men, little children of this world
> Where only the spider pities them . . .

It is not true that only the spider pities them, and anyway they don't want pity, one can't help feeling. One of the greatest weaknesses of modern literature is the substitution of poetic gestures for knowledge, where the poet himself seems conscious of the need of a fact. There is a lack here of what Stendhal called the "little extra fact" without which a rhyme or a poetic phrase becomes an evasion.

This volume shows an astonishing development of Miss Sitwell's talent as a technician, as well as in her material. Much could be written of her use of words, repetitions, and metre in this volume. It is a fascinating book, at moments tragic, and always full of charm. STEPHEN SPENDER

REPORTING ON VARIOUS FRONTS

Berlin Embassy. By WILLIAM RUSSELL. *Michael Joseph.* 10*s.* 6*d.*

Spitfire: Experiences of a Fighter Pilot. By SQUADRON LEADER "B. J. ELLAN." *Murray.* 5*s.*

Ordeal by Fire. By MICHAEL WASSEY. Searchlight Reporter Book. *Secker and Warburg.* 7*s.* 6*d.*

Dover Front. By REGINALD FOSTER. Searchlight Book. *Secker and Warburg.* 6*s.*

Plague Year. THE DIARY OF ANTHONY WEYMOUTH. *Harrap.* 10*s.* 6*d.*

While London Burns. By F. TENNYSON JESSE and H. M. HARWOOD. *Constable.* 12*s.*

Baggage to the Enemy. By EDWARD ARDIZZONE. *Murray.* 5*s.*

Reporters' books are delayed news, but still news. Their merit depends partly on the author, but even more on the reader, who is bullish or bearish according to the market. Thus, there has been a glut of escapes from France, London in the blitz, diaries from everywhere of sitting it out and seeing it through; and I'm not buying any more. Blitz books especially sink towards the bottom of my list. The false exhilaration that set hundreds of diarists going with a sense of history in the making has worked itself out long ago; we have all been bombed, and written about and read about being bombed; to begin all again, with brilliant days in September, 1940, and the thrill of insomnia and bombs that drop without going off, asks too much now of any reader's patience. So, badly or well written, books that

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The chaotic state of the world to-day has begot a readiness to accept chaos and chance, rather than design and purpose, as being the determining factors in all things. It is the aim of this little volume to show that science should now take the lead in giving back to humanity the belief in design and purpose in the universe and in human lives that present-day religion seems powerless to restore.

KEGAN PAUL

go on churning the old news can only be recommended to those who are a year or so behind with their reading.

But there is still a market for anything first-hand about the Axis countries, even dated 1939. *Berlin Embassy* gives a picture of life in the German capital during the first six months of the war, and much of the detail is fresh. The author's job at the American embassy brought him into contact with escaping refugees; he developed a gift for Nazi-baiting, and getting strangers to talk; he has an alert eye for cracks in the system and the general sullenness that betrays fear. A row between a soldier and two S.S. guards in a railway carriage, incidents in the food queues, current jokes, attitudes to Hitler, discomforts and unexpected confessions—these are the kind of news he picks up day by day. One evening he called on a friend, to find her, in a fur coat and gloves, cooking dinner. Lack of fuel, more than anything, releases the hysteria in average German lives. While people sit and freeze at home, in trains, in cafés and ante-rooms, they let out things. Mr. Russell tracks down the common hysteria in a variety of detail, fascinating to discover. Most remarkable, perhaps, is the widespread longing for peace. Germans (not necessarily Nazi) who believe in Hitler as a miracle-man, thought that he would get Poland without war, and when England and France came in and did nothing they still hoped for peace by Christmas. After the Polish campaign, on October 10, rumours of peace swept everywhere. Hitler had done it again! The English Cabinet had fallen! The King had abdicated! It was all over!

> Peace . . . How the word took hold of the German capital that day. How wild with joy the people went. Every time the telephone rang, it brought more rumours and eager questions and flat assertions . . . The Germans I met on the street were smiling broadly: the *Hausfrauen*, the soldiers home on leave, the young stenographers, the workmen in dirty clothes. I had not seen them smiling like that at the time of the *Anschluss* with Austria; they had not smiled on the street when Germany conquered Czechoslovakia bloodlessly; the fall of Warsaw had not caused such a general good humour.

Hitler was to speak at 3 o'clock that afternoon. Everyone expected peace. Peace was not mentioned.

Mr. Russell left Berlin in April, 1940. His account of the first six months of the war includes not only the picture of Berlin, but hints of Germany in general, propaganda and mass feelings, the Nazi bosses, and Hitler himself. The book flickers over a large field of fact and rumour. It belongs, less professionally, to the class of Laird and Graebner's recent conversation piece.

Spitfire! ought to be more exciting to read than it is. There are some brisk descriptions of Channel fights, battles over Dunkirk and over Britain, a chapter of R.A.F. slang, and passages when the author seems to be describing a duck shoot in which the game is Messerschmitts.

> Paradoxically in a fight I always hoped the other chap was a decent sort of guy. It was so clean up there in the blue—the thrill of flying and the bigger thrill of fighting. . . .

Spitfire! is well illustrated with photographs.

Of the four blitz books, I preferred the two Searchlights—one a newspaperman's description of Dover, modest and factual, and the other an account by a fireman of the A.F.S. in action. The latter not only gives a very full picture of A.F.S. organisation, but contains a couple of hair-raising chapters in which a number of firemen tell their personal stories of the early fire-fighting. I recommend *Ordeal by Fire* as a useful piece of journalism.

While London Burns and *Plague Year* are more personal and literary, and the reader's capacity to be thrilled by them will depend on how much of this sort of thing he has read before. Of the two *Plague Year* is more exciting. The author is an official in the Talks Department of the B.B.C., and though his diary, from March, 1940, to February, 1941, includes the usual air-raid nights and days, there is a good deal of interest in his B.B.C. work and meetings with people (Priestley, G.B.S., André Maurois, etc.), in his family chat, everyday moralising, and visits to a son at Eton. Much of his time seems to have been spent listening to news bulletins in the search for a talks subject, and this makes him both attentive to the run of events and inclined to miss the larger happening. He notes, for example, details of the campaign in Norway, but fails to record the anti-Chamberlain movement as it grew with each new revelation of defeat. In general he is apt to lose the wood for the trees—few of his conversations with the famous seem to have been very striking; but he keeps up a fair level of interest and intelligence. *While London Burns*, in the form of letters from the two authors to friends in America, is more ambitious and, on the whole less successful. The publishers claim for Miss Tennyson Jesse an "uncanny gift of prophecy"; but I can't say I found much trace of it. True, in December, 1940, Miss Jesse said that Japan would threaten Burma through Indo-China, but was she alone in discerning that? There are probably more prophets alive to-day than the world has ever seen before, and all of them, on this or that point, have been right. Gift of prophecy seems to me one of the lower knacks of journalism. *While London Burns* is agreeably, if at times a trifle pompously, written, and I can imagine that it will give pleasure to those who haven't reached the saturation-point of this particular topic.

There remains Ardizzone's *Baggage to the Enemy*. It was published some months ago and was old news then, but it is the one book of the batch which escapes from journalism. This is partly due to the illustrations—pen-drawings which tell a story even when reduced to the size of a postage stamp—and to the narrative, which is quietly and admirably written without any striving after effect. Ardizzone was with the B.E.F. in France before and during the fighting, and he has produced a fascinating record of his adventures. Some of the pictures have been seen before, but many are new (to me, at any rate), and they reflect perfectly an era that belongs already to the distant past.

G. W. STONIER

MARTYRS AND LOTUS-EATERS

Living Treasure. By IVAN T. SANDERSON. *Hamish Hamilton.* 16*s.*

South Sea Diary. By S. W. POWELL. *Gollancz.* 8*s.* 6*d.*

High Conquest. By JAMES RAMSEY ULLMANN. *Gollancz.* 16*s.*

These three books illustrate the three main dreams of mankind—working with satisfaction, lotus-eating and martyrdom. They are written by a naturalist, a cocoanut planter and a mountaineer. On the whole the mountaineer, though a rather gaudy and popular writer, has the most interesting subject; for mountaineering is no more than 150 years old and is a pastime, part sport, part spiritual exercise, peculiar to the last phase of our civilisation. The child of Rousseau and the Romantic movement, it has gone through all the phases of the period: from the first awakening of rational curiosity, to idealism and adventure and sport; it has suffered the split between the popular and the arduous and specialist—the critic of the rocks works out his high-brow conundrums—and this exclusive, sceptical,

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aesthetic phase has culminated in the suicidal movement created by German and Italian Fascism. In mountaineering, as in everything else, the Romantic movement has come full circle. Fascism introduced something new into climbing: the fanatic, the hyperbolic, the grotesque. It urged youths to kill themselves on the rocks for the glory of the Fatherland and the Leader. This mad moment was at its maddest just before the war, when Germans were breaking their necks all over the world; and the German disaster on the precipice of the Eigerwand in 1936, in an attempt to win Hitler's gold medal at the Olympic games, was thoroughly symbolical. In the late Seventeen hundreds, when de Saussure climbed Mont Blanc, he said with great penetration: "It became for me an illness. I could not even look upon the mountain, which is visible from round about, without being seized with aching desire." By 1936 that illness had been turned by civilisation into a kind of insanity. Mountaineering in Europe would seem to have entered into a decadence, and one wonders if our instinct for self-torture will not have to find another sublimation. One must leave such speculations to the readers of Mr. Ullmann's *High Conquest*. It is a readable, potted history of the rise of mountaineering, with an account of its great figures and outstanding expeditions, and the story of the early days, the early quarrels and scandals and tragedies, is especially interesting. Mr. Ullmann is happily without mountain mysticism or moral uplift, and if on close inspection the characters of the great mountaineers seem to have an exorbitant strain of masochism, they illustrate the now so easily forgotten fact that human beings are willing to embrace suffering and struggle pretty well for their own sake, for things other than the desire for power.

Mountaineering thrives on the sting of failure and on the challenge of the impossible; but failure embitters the lotus-eater. So the literature of the South Seas is full of the worm in the bud, the serpent in Eden. Mr. Powell's Diary of his life on Tahiti echoes the mountaineer's revolt against the "unnatural" and "degraded" life of civilisation. He thinks the Tahitans morally superior to the Europeans; but since the two races have few moral problems in common, I do not see how he can judge. One is rather tired of this vulgar and fruitless argument. On condition that he could forget that he was dependent on the world copra market and the *status quo* in the Pacific, Mr. Powell was perfectly happy. There was no reason why he should not be: his time was 1912. He bought a small cocoanut plantation, lived with a pleasant and practical-minded native girl and worked just enough to keep himself whole and in touch with reality in that eventless climate. But the worm appeared in the bud. Elephantiasis is one of the diseases of the island; Mr. Powell had been going about barefooted and he got the disease. He watched its growth with horror and was told by a doctor that if he went 500 miles away, say to Cook Island, he would shake it off in a couple of years. He did this, but not all the islands are as paradisaical as Tahiti; boredom, hardship started, and though he had success with the natives as a trader and as a manager of a pearling station, his misfortunes increased. His girl sickened and died after the shock of a canoe accident in one of those sudden squalls which blacken the lagoons. *A South Sea Diary* is an interesting piece of travel. It is tidy, direct and real in its descriptions, clean in its writing and animated by a lively curiosity. The portraits of the traders and natives are sober, and one or two scenes are especially good. There is the account of the return of the pearl divers to the shore, where they are paddled in in triumphant silence, holding the pearl above their heads in a kind of salute, and are suddenly in the midst of an hysterical auction. And another, one of the few touches of humour in the book, gives a farcical description of what happened when some marauding islanders were given the choice of either returning the cocoanuts they had stolen or of running for it while the owner peppered their backsides with a shot gun at 70 yards. This drastic dilemma led to some curious comedy.

Finally, those who are happy in their work, but alas, unhappy, most unhappy, in their prose. Mr. Sanderson is a naturalist, a collector of small animals like the Yucatecan skunk, the Coati of Honduras, Parasol Ants, Mangrove Crabs, Kinkajoos, Tapirs. Jamaica, Haiti, Yucatan and Honduras are the scenes of his travels. Unfortunately, Mr. Sanderson believes that you have got to add whoopee to science to make it readable. His science is interesting, especially such things as his revised edition of the life of the politically notorious and only too topical Atta ants, which appear to have invented deep shelters and gas-proof rooms. His drawings are really superb. But his local colour, his human interest, and above all his sense of humour, are too horrible. Thank heaven Wallace and Bates spared us their hi-jinks.

P. S. VINCENT

RIVER CURRENTS

The Danube Basin. By C. A. MACARTNEY. *Cambridge University Press.* 3s. 6d.

Learning is a fine thing, and learning carried lightly finer still. This small book is the distillation of immense knowledge, and has more potency than many a dilute tome. The problem of the Danube lands, so the author thinks, must be viewed historically, and he presents honestly, fairly, and entirely without wartime prejudice, the essence of their involved and changeful story. Invasion after invasion, through Europe's south-eastern corridor; nation piled against, sifted through, nation; kingdoms and empires imposed upon the milling tribes, and breaking under their own rigid weight; that has been the Danube of the past. The future is the need to organise a region where states, nations, and strategic frontiers can never coincide, and yet where nationalism is a violent impulse; where the natural occupation of the peoples is farming, yet agriculture alone cannot support the population, and attempts at autarchy by small states have meant poverty at the starvation-line. This is serious stuff, and should be read by all who offer slick solutions, such as exchange of populations, or who underrate the explosive nature of the Danube valley, which tempts aggression to-day as much as ever it has done, and which twice in our generation has set off a world war. The study is rendered alluring by a gay opening chapter, which travels down-stream with the reader, from where:

The Danube rises, on a natural calculation, in multitudinous unnamed springs which well up amid moss and bilberries in fir-clad hills of the Black Forest; or officially, since the day when an eighteenth-century princeling was inspired to add lustre to his house by cradling it, in a marble basin which laps the feet of rococco nymphs and mirrors the windows of the Hofpalast of Donaueschingen. It ends on the farthest rim of eastern Europe in desolate, reedy marshes where exotic waterfowl nest in myriads, and bearded Russian fishermen, whose forbears were banished to these fever-stricken purlieus for their unorthodox views on God and Peter the Great, pull great sturgeon out of the water with rod and line and cut out their roes for caviare with rusty penknives.

FREDA WHITE

Medicine versus Invasion. By G. B. SHIRLAW and CLIFFORD TROKE. Foreword by Sir FRANCIS FREMANTLE. Introduction by TOM WINTRINGHAM. *Secker and Warburg.* 7s. 6d.

Anyone who has read Dr. Shirlaw's *Casualty* will know what a practical first-hand mind he has; and how simply and clearly he can write. This is a

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thoroughly helpful book on medical strategy, casualty-work in war—especially in invasion—and the position and duties of the Home Guard in the event of an invasion possibly spread over many months. The authors agree that "a nice, neat, comfortable sort of invasion" has been officially provided for; but they suggest that "the reality will be nasty, untidy and acutely uncomfortable to all concerned."

Dr. Shirlaw is one of those who helped to start the hurriedly improvised medical service in Spain; and Mr. Tom Wintringham testifies from personal experience to the effectiveness of that service. On the basis of their knowledge of guerilla tactics in Spain the authors of *Medicine versus Invasion* have written their book. Five short chapters are devoted to interesting reports, technical in content, popular in expression, of imaginary battles in three different parts of England. These are both vivid and instructive. Dr. Shirlaw thinks that "hot food, sanitation, sleep and reliable news" are the main factors in civilian morale. Sixty-two pages are given up to "Home Guard First-Aid"; and all the advice given is very sound and practical.

Week-end Competitions

No. 635

Set by Audrey Hilton

In contrast to other countries, England is conspicuously lacking in Feast Days. Competitors are asked to invent three new annual public holidays, giving a brief description of their origin, the whole entry not to exceed 150 words.

RULES—

1. Envelopes should be marked with the number of the Problem, in the top left-hand corner, and should be addressed to COMPETITIONS, 10 Great Turnstile, W.C.1. Solutions must reach the Editor by first post on Monday, April 13.

2. The Editor's decision is final. He reserves the right to print in part or as a whole any matter sent in, whether it be awarded a prize or not. MSS. cannot be returned. When no entries reach the required standard no prize will be awarded.

RESULT OF COMPETITION No. 632

Set by J. Chardin

Newspapers and magazines have a pleasant habit of taking for motto a quotation from some famous writer. *The Edinburgh Review* took from Publius Syrus, "*Judex damnatur ubi nocens absolvitur*"; *John Bull* from Byron:

The world is a bundle of hay,
Mankind are the asses who pull;
Each tugs it a different way—
And the greatest of all is John Bull.

The usual prizes are offered for the quotation that would best suit THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION.

Report by J. Chardin

I thought I had made quite clear what was wanted of competitors; but I had not. About half of them suggested, not quotations that might serve as mottos to THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION, but quotations that seemed applicable—birthday greetings, in fact. "Criticulous" extracts from a translation of Homer—presumably Pope's:

O truly great! in whom the Gods have join'd
Such strength of body with such force of mind;
In conduct, as in courage, you excel,
Still first to act what you advise so well.

This is very nice; but could even THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION adopt it as a motto? Major Blimp suggests: "Martin, if dirt were trumps, what hands you would hold!" (Lamb). This is not at all nice, but it is funny. Only, neither seriously nor playfully, nor ironically, could it possibly stand as a motto. Fortunately, the competition produced such a bumper harvest of replies that, albeit many of the liveliest are disqualified on technical grounds, there remains a magnificent sheaf from which (alas!) I may cull but a handful. Of these the two last please me most, and to them accordingly go first and second prize.

RUNNERS-UP

"I won't philosophise and will be read."—*Don Juan*, Canto X, XXVIII. (A. L. Fletcher)

"That one wise Counsel is better than the Strength of many."—Euripides (as quoted by Polybius—Mr. Hampton's Translation, 1756). (C. I.-B.)

ὅστις τοῖα ἔχει ἐν ἡδονῇ ἔχει ἐν ἡδονῇ τοῖα

("For people who like that kind of thing, that is the kind of thing they like.")—Clio in Beerbohm's *Zuleika Dobson*. (John Irwin)

"Odi profanum vulgus et arceo."—Horace, *Odes* III, 1. (A. B. C.)

"Men in earnest have no time to waste in sewing fig-leaves for the naked truth."—Russell Lowell (*Cromwell*). (G. Herbert Davis)

"Liberty of speech inviteth and provoketh liberty to be used again, and so bringeth much to man's knowledge."—Bacon. (M. Blackburn)

"I am nothing, if not critical."—*Othello*, Act 2, Scene I—Iago. (Stephen B. Jansen)

"Nova Monstra questae" (Trans.: "Always on the look-out for a fresh scapegoat.") (Marion Mathews)

"Trust that man in nothing who has not a conscience in everything."—*Tristram Shandy* (Yorick's Sermon). (Mrs. Cumming)

"Something is rotten in the state of Denmark."—*Hamlet*. (Towanbucket)

"O don't the days seem lank and long
When all goes right and nothing goes wrong,
And isn't your life extremely flat
When you've nothing whatever to grumble at!"
—*Princess Ida*. (A. P.-R.)

Yet, though we cannot call their Morals pure,
Their Judgments nice, or their Decisions sure,
Merit they have to mightier Works unknown,
A Style, a Manner, and a Fate their own.
—Crabbe, *The Newspaper*.
(R. W. Ketton-Cremer)

(Though this will hardly do as a motto).

"It takes two to speak the truth—one to speak and another to hear."—Thoreau.

"The greatest of faults . . . is to be conscious of none."—Carlyle. (Rosemary Rapaport)

"Ubi libertas, ibi patria." (George A. Wheatley)

"Misce stultitiam consiliis brevem."—Horace, *Odes* IV, xii, 27. (Matthew Stirling)

"I am in the place where I am demanded of conscience to speak the truth, and therefore the truth I speak, impugn it whoso list."—John Knox's Sermons. (Guy Innes)

"Tout comprendre c'est tout mépriser." (R. C. O.)

(Surely an ingenious misquotation).

"I am a sort of gadfly."—Socrates. (Towanticket)

Hated by fools, and fools to hate,
Be that my motto and my fate.—Swift.
(F. R. S.)

"A cheil's amang ye takin' notes
An' faith, he'll prent them."—Robert Burns.
(Mrs. A. Corrie)

FIRST PRIZE

"If you have tears, prepare to shed them now!" (R. B. PARKER)

SECOND PRIZE

"Utinam tam facile vera invenire possim quam falsa convincere." ("I would that I could as easily discover what is true as I can expose what is false.")—Cicero, *De Natura Deorum*. (SIR ROBERT WITT)

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